

IMPROVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR VULNERABLE
CHILDREN: THE ETHICAL OBLIGATION OF SOCIAL WORK

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DEDICATION

With heartfelt gratitude, I express my deepest thanks to my brother, Advocate Visham, for his unwavering support, patience, and encouragement throughout my journey, and to my beloved sister, Dr. Hemavathy, whose wisdom, compassion, and unconditional love have been my guiding light and emotional strength. Their faith in my vision, constant motivation, and kindness have been the true pillars of my success. As I proudly earn this title, I dedicate this achievement to them with love, gratitude, and profound respect for their invaluable role in my journey.

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ABSTRACT

IMPROVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN; THE ETHICAL OBLIGATION OF SOCIAL WORK

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The protection and promotion of social security and human rights for vulnerable children represent a critical ethical obligation within the field of social work. This study examines the ethical foundations, professional responsibilities, and practical interventions necessary to safeguard children who face poverty, neglect, abuse, exploitation, and social exclusion. Drawing on key human rights frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and social justice principles, the research emphasizes the moral duty of social workers to advocate for equitable access to healthcare, education, and social protection systems. The paper explores how ethical decision-making, child-centered practice, and empowerment approaches guide social workers in addressing systemic inequalities and institutional failures that perpetuate child vulnerability. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of inter-agency collaboration, community-based care, and policy advocacy to ensure long-term social inclusion and resilience among at-risk children. By analyzing contemporary challenges such as child trafficking, street children, and children in conflict zones, the study underscores the need for a rights-based and ethically informed social work practice. Ultimately, this research argues that improving social security and human rights for vulnerable children requires not only professional competence and empathy but also structural reform and collective accountability. The findings aim to contribute to ethical social work discourse and policy development, ensuring that vulnerable children are treated not merely as

beneficiaries of welfare, but as active rights-holders deserving dignity, protection, and empowerment.

Keywords: Social Work Ethics, Vulnerable Children, Human Rights, Social Security, Child Protection, Advocacy

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The children were normally among the most vulnerable groups because they relied on the adults in all aspects including physical and emotional needs. They were more likely to suffer in developing nations where poverty persisted more and social protection systems were underdeveloped as compared to those in industrialized countries. Children who are nurtured in social settings characterized by the observance of human rights and whose families are not under any form of social, economic and political pressure are more likely to become independent, competent, and self-confident compared to children brought up in stressful settings. The social protection systems that are believed to assist the children in realizing their rights will enhance their well-being in the long run. Nevertheless, up to the point there was no attempt to relate the various forms of new social protection system to the realization of children rights.

Around 40 percent of children in third world countries were poor and can be represented as the children earning less than 1.25 a day. This implies that in developing countries, children account to almost half of all the poor citizens. According to the UNICEF (2004), over a billion children lack at least one of the basic needs that they require to live, grow and develop. Childhood poverty and other stressors, which take place over a period of time, may be profoundly affecting not only physical, social, emotional, and neurological development of a child, but also his or her health during adulthood (Shonkoff, Boyce, and McEwen, 2009).

As an example, approximately 200 million children in the entire world are stunted, which is a situation that is difficult to remedy after two years. Some researchers have discovered that non-growing children were susceptible to fall ill, unable to work hard, and more probable to die during childbirth (UNICEF, 2005). Similarly children who lack adequate amounts of both iron and iodine perform poorly in schools and do not stand good chances of getting useful jobs in adulthood on a par with those who have. Making bad investments on children will increase the probability of children growing to be poor in adulthood, strip them of their opportunity to achieve their potential and continue the cycle of poverty into the future with one generation becoming poorer than the other (Handa, Devereux, & Webb, 2010).

Over an increasing number of studies in the developing world have found out that social protection programs, either targeted or indirectly targeted at children, can positively impact on their diet, health and education, reduce their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation, safeguard their rights, and lead to long term growth in children. Other programs such as pensions, unemployment insurance, and government works projects could serve to benefit the children even though all these programs are not necessarily directed towards them. In addition, interventions, which address external forces, unjust society, and the social ostracizing of the underprivileged group, attempt to prevent the transmission of the disease or negative social norms, which in the end should enhance the health of the children (UNICEF, 2012). Nonetheless, not every measure can be considered to be good to children and some of them can result in unfair treatment of certain groups and not in focusing on the needs of the marginalized groups or perpetuating the unfair conditions.

It happens too often that policies and social protection programs tend to imagine how they can assist economically vulnerable people without sufficient attention to assist socially vulnerable people (Sabates-Wheeler, Devereux, and Hodges, 2009). Money related families are prone to family violence and addictive behavior (Hossain and Eyben, 2009), mental health issues (Jones and Marsden, 2009) and worsening health and nutrition among children is on the increase (UNICEF, 2005). When an individual merely considers the income of the child to gauge the well-being of a child, he/she is likely to lose other things that influence the opportunities in his/her life (Gabel, 2009). Failure to pay due attention to social weaknesses more particularly in crises can decrease the vulnerability of children since there is less supervision of the adults, child labour and prostitution are more usual, children attend schools less frequently and their health and dietary condition deteriorates (Harper, Jones, Perezniето, and McKay, 2011).

All people have human rights and certain rights can apply exclusively to children only and some rights must be reiterated in their example. These rights are mentioned in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It gives a precedent of an affected childhood in relation to social and cultural factors. That is the first international treaty according to which the children also have rights and can participate in the society. Up to date 193 of the 196 states are signatories to the CRC and have incorporated it as a state constitutional and statutory law. The CRC is aware that parents and other significant carers are the ones, who are the most responsible when it comes to raising children and that parents can require assistance in doing the work. According to the CRC, the states ought to contribute to the welfare of the children and they should help support the parents and other carers (Hodgkin and Newell, 2007).

According to the Convention, it is the right of all children to be treated with respect as well as it is their right to grow and develop. It has four key concepts, which are: they must not discriminate with children; should act with best interests of the children; they have a right to live, survive and develop; and they also need to listen to the child and hear what he or she has to say.

The 2nd Article of the CRC addresses non-discrimination. The statement adds that children are equal regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, political beliefs, disability, native or social background, and parental or guardian background. Article 6.ocr of CRC states that every child is entitled to the natural right to life. This is agreed upon by other human rights documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). But the CRC article continues that states have a duty that they should assume measures to facilitate to the maximum the survival and growth of the child. Article 6 further adds that states should safeguard the rights of children and remain childish way of life in the life of a child without fear of any danger or violence, rather make children experience that period of their life in security, care, and ready to be adults.

Article 3 of the CRC indicates that all individuals carrying out something with a child must act in the best interest of the child. These are parents, child welfare, courts, and legislative. This notion has influenced lawmaking, strategies, policies, and programs in the whole world, and even legal determinations, which affect lives of children. It is a controversial issue as it occupies quite a large space and can be interpreted in numerous ways. This is more so in the cause of children rights in a sociocultural context. Examples of female genital mutilation, child marriage and work gain much advantage as it can be discussed as realizing children right to live according to their culture, religion etc. or abusing children and depriving them of the process of growing up (Jones and Marsden, 2009).

Article 12 and the articles related with it (7, 8, 13, 14, 15, and 17) are also debatable. According to these articles, children are citizens and should be given a chance to have their voices heard and respected on cases that involve them depending on their age. Due to this principle, states should ensure that they listen to the voices of children. Different perspectives exist concerning the extent to which states should influence children to make choices and the way to do it. This concept is viewed as a menace to parental authority in certain countries, such as the USA and its feasibility is doubted. Individuals possess civil and political rights, social, economic, and cultural ones. One of the records discussing such rights is the CRC. The civil and political rights,

such as the equal protection before the law and freedom of association are to be expected to come into effect immediately. Social, Economic and Cultural on the other hand, can be implemented after some time and according to the state resources available. The CRC tells states that as long as they lack excessive resources they must strive to achieve rights progressively. The states do not however need to do it when they lack sufficient resources (Shura, 2008).

Social protection schemes have four components. These include social insurance, usually paid by workers in the formal sector, and aimed at assisting people to cope with risks such as illness, old age, disability and unemployment, social assistance, aimed at assisting poor and disadvantaged people but does not go further to understand how these attempts can assist or disadvantage social justice and the fulfilment of rights (Jones and Marsden, 2009).

Not all attempts at defending the rights of people would result in their gaining such rights since they offer a temporary solution and also render people more addicted and when people are addicted, they can quietly surrender themselves to rights to fairness, equality and justice. Although numerous social protection systems have been established in the developing nations within the recent decade, there has been no classification of these systems according to how they assist people enjoy their rights upheld yet (Gabel, 2012).

Ethical obligations of social workers and Human Rights for Vulnerable Children

Among the crucial needs that should be addressed in the modern society is the enhancement of social security and human rights among the vulnerable children. Although better policies and practices have been integrated to improve child welfare, millions of children in the world still experience serious threats including threats to their safety and well-being and even their rights. In this regard, the social workers are instrumental in ensuring that these rights of vulnerable children are advocated and preserved under the auspices of a set code of ethical principles, in identification of their professional duties and responsibilities. (Ife, 2022). The paper examines the ethical aspects of the social work practice with the aim of enhancing the social security and human rights of the vulnerable children and discusses the ethics that guide the practice of social work, the dilemmas and challenges that face social workers in the course of their practice and how they can find integrity and compassionate way of addressing this dilemma.

In the current society, the need to improve social security and human rights of vulnerable children is very much of an imperative. Nevertheless, even with the improved policy and practice related to child welfare, millions of children throughout the world remain at high risk

of their safety, well-being, and basic rights. In this regard, social workers have an important role to play in defending and promoting the rights of the vulnerable children with a code of ethics that determines their professional duties and responsibilities. (Ife, 2022). The paper discusses the ethical aspects of the social work practice in the quest to enhance social security and human rights of the vulnerable children and how the following ethical principles guide social work practice, the challenges and dilemmas involved in the work of the social worker, and how these challenges are met without violating ethical aspects of practice and at the same time showing empathy and compassion.

Mainly, the primary ethical requirement of the social workers is to prioritize their well-being and safety as the first and the foremost significance in enhancing the social security and human protection of vulnerability children. It involves an active attitude to detecting and responding to the risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence (Banks, 2020). Social workers possess the necessary skills and experience to recognize the red flags of possible child abuse, to evaluate the level of the risk of the child, and put in place the measures towards guaranteeing the safety of the child. This can include making referrals and Seeking services and supports, coordinating and interviewing family and other concerned parties, interviewing family members, and making referrals by conducting home visits. This means that, through timely and efficient intervention, social workers will help to reduce the negative aspects of abuse, neglect, and ensure that children will not be attracted to more tragedies, and ensure that their physical, emotional, and psychological health is improved.

Besides handling children and family directly, social workers have the moral responsibility of advocating policy and practice, which uphold best interests and children rights, on a systemic level. This is not only limited to individual cases but covers larger issues, like poverty, inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, which are the basic causes of child vulnerability and insecurity. Some of the possible types of advocacy that social workers can practice are legislative reforms, involvement in the process of policy development and implementation, mobilization, and awareness development regarding the topical problems concerning child welfare (Costello, 2015). Social workers can bring positive change at structural level by increasing the voice of vulnerable children and families, demanding unfair policies and practices and collaborate with other stakeholders to build a more just and equitable society where all children can enjoy (Rogowski,2012). The essence of social work practice is empowerment and it will play an even bigger role in enhancing efforts to increase the social security and human right of vulnerable children. As a social worker, it is ethical to empower

children and families to achieve their agency, voice and participate actively in decision-making processes that touch their lives (Reamer, 2013). This entails the autonomy and dignity of the children and the recognition of strengths and abilities and availing information, skills and resources that they require in order to make informed decisions and speak up in their own behalf. Social workers use various forms of empowerment techniques such as strength-based approaches, client centred interventions, and participatory techniques to be more empowering to encourage self-determination, develop resilience and improve abilities of children and families to overcome adversities and achieve their objectives.

As they perform their duties, social workers are frequently faced with ethical dilemmas, which they must consider carefully and think through, consulting with their colleagues and other supervisors. It is also especially relevant in terms of the child welfare and protection where conflicting interests, values, and obligations could arise (Giulianotti, 2014). As an example, social workers might have to encounter dilemmas whose results involve confidentiality and information disclosure where social workers are required to place the privacy and autonomy of the client on one side and the obligation of preserving the well-being and security of children on the other side.

Likewise, social workers can face the issue of dilemmas associated with parental rights and parenting, in which they have to balance parental rights to make decisions concerning the raising of the children with the obligation to intervene in the event of children being exposed to harm (Stanley, 2018). Through the principles of ethics, referring to and utilizing the ethical decision-making models, and implementing the reflective and supervisory learning continuously, social workers may approach these dilemmas with the sense of honesty and compassion and eventually, serve to the best interests of susceptible children and families. The process of making social security and human rights more accessible to vulnerable children is a complicated and demanding endeavour, which requires the joint effort of multiple stakeholders and social workers should be at the centre of attention (Healy, 2020). The social workers are guided by a set of core ethical principles, which puts them ethically obliged to promote child safety and well-being, systemic change, empower children and families, and guide them through ethical dilemmas with integrity and compassion. Through these ethical norms, the social workers are able to make significant and successful change in the lives of vulnerable children so that they are given a chance to live and achieve their potential.

Role in ensuring a safe and supportive environment for every child

Safety and the well-being of children is an essential right stipulated in the international conventions and national laws. However, there are still millions of children in different parts of the world who are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence that threatens their physical, emotional, and psychological health (Lewallen, 2015). Here, the social workers have a great contribution of ensuring that children are provided with safe and favourable environments which they can mature and flourish. This paper will discuss the significance of the social workers in developing protective environment to children, the challenges affected and how they can overcome the challenges to ensure children have positive and healthy environment which safeguards them.

Child protection covers an array of interventions and policies that are aimed at preventing and addressing risks to the safety and well-being of children (Domitrovich, 2017). It entails the identification and response of these factors, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence and the reinforcement of positive parental practices, promoting family strengthening, and community support (Rogers, 2020). The social worker profession is on the centre stage of the child protection initiative, collaborating with the family and community as well as other professionals to make sure that a child is free of harm and receives the support and services expected to make them flourish. Social workers are also important in their role of promoting protective environments to children and reducing the risks involved to them through a combination of assessment, intervention, advocacy and prevention.

The social workers are the key people in child protection where they act as advocates, evaluators, interveners, and even supporters of needy children and families. They are prepared to identify the indicators and symptoms of abuse and neglect, evaluate the extent of danger to children, and take the necessary action to protect their health and safety (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Social workers collaborate with families to achieve the underlying problems of poverty, substance abuse, mental illness and domestic violence and help the family to overcome the problems and live in moderate environments that support their children. Where children face a severe threat of harm, social workers can take protective measures, which can include withdrawing children in hazardous environments or petitioning the court to protect the safety of the children (Pangrazi, 2019).

Social workers endeavour to maintain the right of children through their activities and to advance the interest of the child with the aim of enabling the child to succeed in safe and

favourable circumstances. Social workers encounter lots of challenges in child protection work albeit the significant role that they play. The low resources, large number of cases and high stress and burnout can affect their capacity to properly assess and intervene in the safety and well-being of children. As well, it may also be hindered by complicated family relationships, cultural disparities, and laws (Breiner, 2016). Another fact facing social workers is ethical issues. On the one hand, they might need to make decisions about balancing between parents rights and the necessity to ensure the safety of their children, on the other hand, between the rights of clients to privacy and the responsibilities to provide help to the allegedly abused and neglected children. Such struggles need holistic intervention that focuses on the welfare of children and families, provides assistance to the professional and personal welfare of social workers themselves.

Social workers use various strategies and interventions to ensure child safety and well-being involving assessment, intervention, prevention, and advocacy. Assessment requires is to get information regarding children and families, risk, and protective factors and formulate a holistic understanding of the needs and strengths of both (World Health Organization. 2021). Intervention can be direct services like counselling, case management and support groups and liaising with other professionals and agencies in dealing with more intricate problems, like substance abuse, mental illness and domestic violence (Singh,2020).

Prevention activities should minimize chances of children getting hurt through positive parenting behaviour, family building and community services. Advocacy means taking the voice of children and families and creating awareness on the issue of child protection and also advocating policies and practices that help to enhance the safety and well-being of children. In such strategies, social workers strive endlessly to make ideal and favourable conditions to each child so that they can grow and attain their potential. The provision of a secure and conducive environment to all children is a civil duty that must be exercised jointly by the individuals, families, communities and institutions. The role of social workers is crucial in the above effort, as they act as advocates, evaluators, interferers, and advocates to children and needy families (Allen, 2021). In their practice social workers attempt to defend the right of children, further their best interests, and empower them to live in safe and supportive conditions. Based on appreciating the role of social workers in providing child protection and actually encouraging their work towards a child safety and well-being, then individuals can establish a society where all children can grow, learn and prosper.

Strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of social work practices for Vulnerable Children

Social workers are important to help vulnerable children and families to deal with a broad variety of problems including abuse, neglect, poverty, and trauma. In order to improve the performance of social work practice with vulnerable children, it is necessary to discover and introduce the strategies and interventions, which are evidence-based, cultural-sensitive, and responsive to the particular demands of the child and family. This article examines potentially beneficial approaches and interventions in social work practice with vulnerable children, their theoretical basis, partially supported by empirical research, and potential application of the interventions to practice (Germain, 2020). Trauma-informed care is one of the methods of dealing with vulnerable children due to the identified effects of trauma on the development of children, their behaviour, and well-being in social work practice. The three pillars of a trauma-informed practice are safe and supportive environments, trustful relationships, and trauma-sensitive interventions (McFadden, 2015). A variety of approaches to trauma that social workers use, includes psychoeducation, mindfulness, expressive therapies, and trauma-oriented cognitive-behavioural therapy that assist the child in making sense of their experiences, manage their feelings, and acquire skills to cope with traumas. Social workers have an opportunity to facilitate healing, resilience and recovery among vulnerable children by targeting the consequences of the trauma.

Strengths-based approaches, or the emphasis on identifying and developing the strengths and resources of the child and a family, is another potential strategy in the practice with vulnerable children in the social work. Rather than considering children through the perspective of their weaknesses and issues only, the strengths-based practice focuses on recognizing the inherent resilience of children, their capacities and growth opportunities. Social workers work together with children and families in identifying their strengths, establishment of goals and developing action plans based on the assets available to them such that they can maximize on their strengths and be able to surmount any set back. With the help of a strengths-based attitude and model, the social workers can encourage the self-efficacy, empowerment, and beneficial results among the vulnerable children and families (Howe, 2012). Another potential practice option in social work practice to work with vulnerable children is the family-centred practice which appreciates the significance of building a partnering family in the assessment, planning as well as service provision to children. Family-centred practice contrasts a family with a passive consumer of

services and valuing expertise and knowledge and their strengths in supporting each other and attaining their objectives (Lander, 2013). Social workers cooperate with the family to define their priorities, resources, strengths, and develop specific plans that should utilize their existing resources and capabilities and reinforce their hopes. The involvement of families as active players in the intervention strategy will ensure that social workers increase their motivation, ownership, and commitment to change, which results in improved positive outcomes to vulnerable children.

In practicing social work among vulnerable children, interprofessional collaboration is fundamental since it enables the delivery of holistic services and support in many areas. Social workers are in partnership with professionals of various fields to include education, healthcare, mental health, and child welfare to meet the intricate needs of vulnerable children and families in a comprehensive way (Cocker, 2016). Interprofessional collaboration is related to the exchange of information, resources, and expertise, the coordination of services and interventions, the collaboration to attain shared purposes. The strength and view presented by other disciplines can help social workers increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their action in favour of vulnerable children, and foster a closer and cohesive delivery of services (Becker, 2012). Another strategy, which can be promising in the social work practice with vulnerable children, is the application of technology, which can increase access to services, enhance communication, as well as facilitate engagement and participation. Social workers can use any of the numerous technological tools and platforms including telehealth, mobile applications, virtual reality, and online support groups to reach out to children and families, undertake interventions, and offer support and resources. The barriers that can be overcome with the help of technology include the geographical distances, transportation, the stigma, and vulnerable children and families will receive more access to services and support. Through the adoption of technology in their practice, social workers would be able to reach more children, work more efficiently, and provide better services to vulnerable kids.

To increase the efficiency of social work with vulnerable children, it is a complex process that involves the use of the evidence-based approach, cultural competence, and attention to individual needs of both a child and family (Gambrill, 2012). The challenges that vulnerable children are dealing with are also quite complex, requiring social workers to implement certain promising strategies and interventions, including trauma-informed care, strengths-based approaches, family-centred practice, interprofessional collaboration, and the utilization of technology to ensure the safety and health of vulnerable children and their resilience. Through

these strategies, social workers are able to enhance the outcomes of vulnerable children and families as well as build stronger communities, making the society a fair and just place to live.

It is necessary to address the vulnerabilities and protect the rights of children, particularly those living in developing nations because it would facilitate their well-being and promising future development. The interrelation between poverty and the social protection systems as well as children rights emphasize the importance of considering holistic approaches in which the safety, health, and dignity of children are put into the first-order priorities. Even though poverty is a major challenge, social protection programs have proven to contain the negative impacts of the same on children especially in nutrition, health, education, and protection against exploitation (Hossain, 2009). The CRC provides a comprehensive framework of children rights promotion and protection, focusing on the non-discrimination, the best interest of the child, survival, development, participation. (Jones et al., 2009). Nonetheless, the actualization of these rights is only possible through the joint efforts of governments, civil societies, and international bodies that can guarantee successful practices and execution of child-based policies and initiatives.

As an advocate of vulnerable children, social workers have the responsibility to act according to the ethical principles in the best interests of children such as their safety, well-being, and empowerment. Through assessment, intervention, prevention, and advocacy, the social workers assist in design of safe and conducive environments where children can flourish (Hossain, 2009). The strategies of trauma-informed care, strengths-based approach, family-focused practice, interprofessional collaboration, and technological use have been promising approaches that increase the efficiency of the social work practice when handling vulnerable children and families. To enhance social security and human rights to vulnerable children, it is necessary to approach it in a holistic manner where the needs of vulnerable kids are met, and their dignity and agency is taken seriously as well as their active contribution in making decisions impacting their lives (Gabel, 2012). Through child welfare, investment in social protection systems and respect of the rights of children, societies are able to establish environments where every child gets a chance to realize their full potentials and be productive members of the communities and the whole world.

Finally, to ensure the development of sustainable solutions to curb the causes of child vulnerability, there is a need to promote the collaboration between the stakeholders, such as governments, NGOs, communities, and families. The combination of efforts and resources combined with a form of tapping into the expert knowledge base will allow individuals to devise

holistic approaches that will deal with the interlocking nature of the factors making children vulnerable. Additionally, it is possible to lift the poverty trap through investing in education, health, social services, and economic opportunities to the families so that children can have a chance of flourishing in the society (Gabel, 2012c). Finally, ideal human resources management to protect the rights and welfare of vulnerable children must be based on social justice, equity and human dignity such that all children despite their situations are able to grow and mature in a secure, supportive atmosphere where their rights are guaranteed and preserved.

1.2 Research Problem

The issue that is explored in this research problem pertains to the ethical mandate of the social workers to enhance social security and human rights among the vulnerable children. Through endeavours to tackle the child welfare problems, vulnerable children are still at great perils of loss of safety, well-being and basic rights. As the practitioners in child welfare and protection who are on the frontline, social workers have the obligation to protect the rights and needs of vulnerable children and pursue their best interests (Adams, 2017). Nevertheless, the intricacies of the child welfare practice, such as ethical dilemmas, legal restrictions, and resource limitations can be very challenging to the social worker. Hence, the research problem of the proposed study is to explore the ethical aspects of social work practice in child welfare contexts and determine the measures and interventions that may promote the achievement of effective social work practice in social security and human rights provision to vulnerable children (Arango, 2018). Among the elements of the research problem, it is necessary to investigate the essence of moral values and principles according to which a social worker works with vulnerable children (Kadushin, 2014). These encompass human dignity, social justice, cultural competence, and the best interests of the child principles which generate the basis of making ethical decisions and taking ethical action in children welfare environments. Through exploring the ethical concepts underlying social work practice, this paper will establish the core values and beliefs serving as the foundation of the interactions between social workers and children and families as well as the guide to determine the interventions and advocacy activities.

The other part of the research problem is to analyse the ethical dilemmas, which face social workers when they have to work with vulnerable children. Ethical dilemmas can be encountered where there is conflict in the values, obligation, or interests of the social workers and the role they play in making a decision about what is actually right. Social workers can be experiencing

issues regarding confidentiality and sharing information, parental rights and responsibilities and cultural competence and diversity, professional boundaries among others in the area of child welfare (Featherstone, 2014). This paper will find out the complexities and challenges of ethical decision-making in child welfare practice and explore how social workers can traverse the ethical dilemmas with integrity and kindness by examining the ethical problems and ethical dilemmas that social workers encounter in their daily practice. The research problem will consist in analysing the effects of ethical social work practice on vulnerable children and their families (Pecora, 2018). It is a professional practice of social work that is maintained by ethics and beliefs that seek to protect and instil the rights and dignity of children, enforce social justice and fairness and pursue the best interests of children and families. This research, through analysing the connection of ethical practice with a positive outcome of children, seeks to justify the need to have an ethical factor incorporated in every facet of social work practice at all times. This involves establishing trust relationship with children and families, honouring their autonomy and cultural beliefs and seeking their rights and needs in the wider social and political environment. This study is expected to enhance social security and human rights of the vulnerable children, by exploring the moral duties of social workers, and examining the strategies and interventions that could be adopted to make the social work practice more effective in terms of managing children welfare (Goldingay, 2020). This paper aims to answer this research question so as to facilitate in enhancing the rights and welfare of these vulnerable children by informing policy and practice undertakings and also give a more profound realization of the ethical aspects of the practice of social work.

1.3 Purpose of Research

This study is aimed at investigating the ethics of social workers in the enhancement of social security and human rights on vulnerable children. The role of the social worker in protecting the lives of the vulnerable children and securing their rights is being recognized in the last few years as a very important issue. Nevertheless, even after the attempts at improving child welfare policies and practices, a range of challenges remain such as the presence of issues pertaining to poverty, inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion (Alston, 2020). Thus, the chosen research paper aims at discussing the ethical aspects of social work practice in dealing with such issues and enhancing the rights and welfare of vulnerable children. This paper will be useful in achieving a better understanding of ethical standards relevant to issues of child welfare

and protection as it seeks to address ethical obligations of social workers (Singh,2020). Some of the core values of ethics in practice among the social workers include respect of human dignity, social justice, and putting the best interests of children at heart. It is also addressing the ethical issues that social workers have to face when they work with vulnerable children and how they manoeuvre around the ethical issues with integrity and caring nature.

This paper seeks to identify the significance of maintaining human rights and support social justice in dealing with vulnerable children in social work processes. It aims to analyze the advocacy of the policy and practices by the social worker that give precedence to the rights and best interest of the child both on the systemic and individual levels. The purpose of the study is to reveal the challenge and complications of dealing with vulnerable children and assist in developing ethical guidelines and standards in social work practice in child welfare and child protection by illuminating on the ethical issues involved in the social work practice (Wagaman,2015). Moreover, this research will attempt to understand how ethical social work practice can have the potential benefits of influencing the well-being of the vulnerable children and their families. Through the exploration of the relationship between ethical practice and the desirable outcomes on children, it attempts to illustrate the significance of the process of incorporating ethical considerations into everything in the social work practice. Here, such aspects as developing trusting relationships with children and families, respect of their autonomy and cultural beliefs, and the promotion of their rights and needs within the social and political context at large are mentioned (Coulshed, 2018). This study aims at enhancing the insight into the ethical responsibilities of social workers in enhancing social security and human rights of vulnerable children. Through examining the principles, dilemmas, and strategies in ethical social work practice, the study will inform policy and practice programs to improve child welfare and protection and to advance the advocacies of children as an up-to-date practice that takes care of the interests and well-being of all children irrespective of their situation.

1.4 Significance Of The Study

The importance of this study is that it has examined ethical requirements of social workers to enhance social security and human rights of the vulnerable children. Children who are orphaned, homeless, refugees, abused or exploited, and vulnerable children are some of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in the society. The safety, health and the ability of every citizen to receive the basic rights of a given society are an extremely important necessity

of a society that aspires to social justice and human rights (Banks,2020). As child welfare practitioners and protector frontline practitioners, social workers are very instrumental in dealing with the multi-faceted issues of vulnerable children and to lobby their rights and needs. It is important to note that the ethical requirements of social workers allow policymakers and practitioners to be informed about current welfare and protection policies. Through the analysis of some ethical principles that direct the work of a social worker, the given paper can assist in determining a structure of making an ethical decision and taking an ethical course of action in the environment of child welfare (Kim, 2011). Such principles as respect towards human dignity, social justice, cultural competence, and the best interests of the child can offer some background to ethical social work practice. This study can influence the creation of ethical rules and norms of social workers who should work with vulnerable children by determining the main ethical values that the practice is based on.

The paper also has an implication in the field of social work learning and training. This study can promote integrity and compassion in social workers to handle the morally complex issues that they meet with vulnerable children by reminding social work students and practitioners of the challenges they may face. It can also guide the creation of ethics training and ongoing education programs and initiatives to social workers to equip them with the knowledge and skills they require to help them deal with the ethical issues presented in their practice (Buka, 2022). This research can facilitate the achievement of this goal by incorporating ethical factors in educational and training programs in social work so that vulnerable children can have a high quality of life and guaranteed rights by their social workers. The research has significance to research and scholarly work in the area of social work and child welfare (Engel, 2016). This study can be used to understand better the factors which affect ethical decision-making and action within the child welfare context, because of the ethical aspects of social work practice. It can also illuminate on the effect of social work practice that is ethical on the health of the vulnerable children and their families, giving evidence to the relevance of applying ethical concern on every area of social work practice. The given study can make a contribution to the development of the area of social work and inform the future research and scholarship in the sphere of ethics in child welfare practice as well, because this field creates new knowledge and interactions.

Also, this research has a more extended social impact regarding safeguarding the rights of children and advancing social justice. This study can increase awareness of the need to tackle child welfare issues in the larger social and political scene by noting that social workers have

ethical responsibilities that would help them to promote social security and human rights among vulnerable children (Tol, 2011). It may also act as a reminder to the policy makers, practitioners and other advocates to focus on the rights and needs of vulnerable children and to take practical action to correct the systemic dynamics that predispose them to vulnerability (Ladd, 2012). This study can help in establishing a better and fairer society where all children, irrespective of their situations, stand equal because of the advocated policies and practices that uphold the rights and happiness of vulnerable children.

1.5 Research Purpose And Questions

This research paper aims at investigating what social workers ought to do to enhance the human rights and social security of the at-risk children. The increasing numbers are proving that social workers work to safeguard the health and safety of those children who are at risk and battle to protect their rights. The general aim of this study is to discuss the ethical aspects of social work practice with regard to vulnerable children. The following research questions will be answered to attain this:

- What is the key ethical obligations of social workers in promoting the social security and human rights of vulnerable children?
- What challenges do social workers face in fulfilling these obligations, and how do they navigate ethical dilemmas in their practice?
- What strategies or interventions show promise in enhancing the effectiveness of social work practice with vulnerable children?

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Social Justice Theory

The social justice theory is one that should be given due consideration within the adolescent system due to several factors and social injustice is harmful to the adolescents. Poverty and dysfunction in the home elevate mental, emotional, and behavioral illnesses; retarded cognitive development; poor physical well-being and other adolescent setbacks (O'Connell et al., 2009). Moreover, these are the unfortunate effects that befall the youths the most. The level of poverty among children and youth in the United States has been more than a hundred times higher than the rate of poverty among adults, and it continues to increase many years on. An illustration to this is the percentages of low-income families with the adolescents (12-17) increased by 33-36 percent between 2000 and 2008 (Wight and Chau, 2009). More so, members of youth minorities are more likely than not to form part of the individuals who are the biggest casualties of injustice and inequality. An example is that children in low-income families as well as ethnic minorities have a disproportionate likelihood of residing in neighbourhood's that lack parks, museums, and libraries, and face an increased rate of violence. The capability of neighbourhood's in supporting positive growth and general well-being of young people is lost in areas that do not possess such attributes (O'Connell et al. 2009).

Social justice entails having an equal and equitable distribution of power, resources, and responsibilities among all the members of a society regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, and spiritual or religiousness. Equity and fairness, equal accessibility as well as parity in access to services are some of the fundamental principles underlying this concept of a just society (Van den Bos 2003). These ideals generate as well the civilized meaningfulness of a democratic and equalized society. Besides the strong connection between health and wellness, there is health and social justice (Sue, 2001). Devoid of the feeling of justice, an individual is likely to exhibit emotional pain or mental disequilibrium and what is more, it will increase the likelihood of being sick. Social justice concerns and access to resources are associated with the collective welfare of families, communities, and society in general in an intricate way (Hage 2005; Kenny and Hage 2009; Prilleltensky and Nelson 2002).

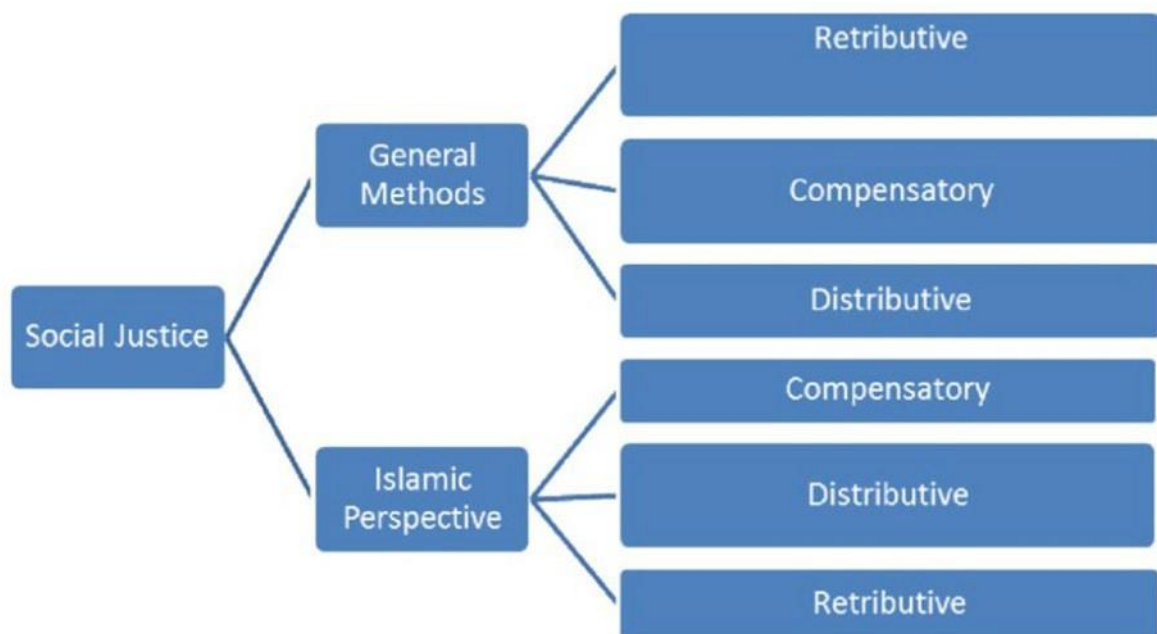


Figure 1: Social Justice Theory Source: (Sofi, 2016)

Effects of Inequality on Adolescents

It has been demonstrated in numerous studies that poverty and inequality among adolescents have a negative influence on their physical, mental and social development (Young et al., 2001; Wadsworth et al. 2008; Hay et al. 2007). There is a correlation between poverty and higher rates of newborn deaths hence the adverse effects to health start at the infancy stage. The authors examined the relationship between family income and living status and the physical health of adolescents (Abernathy et al., 2002). Poorer income levels were also identified to relate with poor health-related practices. Some of the risk factors were identified in adolescents whose home had low income, teenagers who were not very active, resided in a family that smoked cigarettes and directly smoked cigarettes themselves. Regular doctor was also the less common characteristic of adolescents who belonged to low-income families (Abernathy et al., 2002).

It was found out that unhealthy behaviors were related to low socioeconomic level. The authors of this research examine the impact of inequality of wealth nationally on unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking and drinking (Elgar et al., 2005). Elgar et al., (2005) examined the relationship between Income inequality and alcohol consumption among adolescents aged 11, 13, and 15 in

the countries with a high degree of inequality. They found that teenagers in countries having more income differences were much more likely to drink at the ages of 11 and 13. Moreover, they also consumed alcohol more, and 11-year olds consumed alcohol more often, up till the time when they were drunk (Elgar et al. 2005). A substantial amount of research (Evans and Kim, 2007) gives us a correlation which exists between the adolescent poverty and the adverse health effects. This may lead to their reduced lifespan as poverty exposes them to these poor health variables and the adults in poverty are likely to experience higher levels of chronic health conditions. A case in point is that among low-income adolescents, teen obesity was more prevalent, and the teenagers in the sample of Miech et al. (2006) showed poorer chances of getting physical exercise (Vieweg et al., 2007). They found that access to public health insurance was negatively correlated with unhealthy adolescent weight compared to the private health insurance. To be more precise, the percentage of unhealthy weight among Hispanic teenagers was identified to be the largest, then that of Black teenagers.

It has also been established that there is a high level of psychological impact of poverty during the stage of adolescence. Low-income adolescents are more likely to experience the stressful life events such as family conflicts and violence in the neighborhood than their more wealthy counterparts (Centre for Disease Control 2007). Moreover, ethnic minority teenagers are more apt to live in low-income, crime-infested environments, which exposes them to the risks of becoming victimized and affected by their environment (Douglas-Hall et al., 2006; Schiavone, 2009). Schiavone (2009) asked adolescents of low-income communities about their violence experiences. All the minority youths who were questioned indicated that they witnessed acts of violence frequently. The participants experienced emotional suffering as a result of such events, as described by Schiavone (2009) hence their helplessness and fear. This led to them having mistrust. Also, teenagers in poor families have a higher probability of being anticipated to take an adult role earlier (Dashiff et al. 2009). According to the study conducted by Dashiff et al. (2009), the awareness of teenagers that their parents face some financial difficulties could potentially cause poor mood effects, powerlessness, and shame. Low-income adolescents are more likely to show depression, substance misuse and sexual activity at an earlier age. Dashiff et al. (2009) state that mental healthcare is often not available in lower income zones despite the fact that these regions are at increased mental health risk.

Also, transgender, bisexual, and gay young people might experience unfriendly environments at home and in the school. Their perceived sexuality is one of the reasons why people are harassing others in schools (Matthews et al., 2009). According to a recent research, even after

leaving their teenage years lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths are likely to have attempted suicide 8.4 times, experience high levels of depression 5.9 times, use illegal drugs 3.4 times, and engage in unprotected sexual intercourse 3.4 times due to rejection in their teenage years (Ryan et al., 2009). This is compared to other students who reported no or low rejection levels in their families. Like the earlier studies (Descamps et al., 2000; Hodges and Perry, 1999), this study implied that bullying or ostracizing at school based on identity of an individual has a negative influence on the growth and development of the adolescents, and it is likely that the bullied youth will be involved in risky activities including drug abuse, low self-esteem, poor grades, and mental disorders.

Preventative interventions in the young people can be the best stage aimed at minimizing threat variables and at the same time maximizing protective variables (Kenny et al., 2009; Wolf, 2005). The fact that there are both protective as well as risk factors in both the individual as well as the societal level affects adolescents in a number of ways since they are influenced by a number of groups and systems. Examples of protective factors are the abilities of people to strengthen themselves when faced with danger or misery like poverty, intolerance or oppression (Walsh et al. 2009). Certain aspects such as perseverance, faith in one oneself, serving people and academic success are some of these elements. Risk adolescents are still likely to face social injustice but these circumstances enhance their odds of success overcoming these barriers at home, at school, or in the community.

The best approach to attain social justice using prevention is systemic interventions that reduce inequality in different environments like schools and communities (Kenny et al., 2009; Wolf 2005). These prevention programs are meant to build the competency of young people as they reduce their problems to empower them (Wolf 2005). The objectives of the group are to teach the youths on how to better manage circumstances concerning power imbalances and to influence policy change that could ultimately hinder the attainment of social justice (Wolf 2005). Proper interventions enable youth, families, and communities to make a positive individual and structural change to promote social justice (Conyne, 2004).

Guidelines for Effective Preventive Interventions

The prevention scholars have begun to develop a list of suggestions of social justice-based interventions applicable to the teens (Hage et al., 2007; Walsh, 2009). Adolescent-specific social contexts should be given due attention before any other factor is taken into consideration during the program design phase (Walsh et al. 2009). Specifically, the programs must focus on

addressing the adolescent life on social, familial, educational, governmental, and community levels considering both protective and risk factors in these settings. Second, since the real change cannot occur within an individual level, programs must be created with social justice and systemic change in perspective (Hage and Kenny 2009; Kenny et al. 2009). Third, the preventative treatments should be specific to the level of development of the target population. It is important to note that puberty is a process that entails transition of elementary level to junior level and the third to adulthood. Passing through this stage, young adults have difficulties with determining their future career decision, education, and family life alongside with a growing personal and civic responsibility. The challenge of teenagers into adulthood can be an improved preventive intervention provided that their special needs of development are emphasized (Walseht al., 2009).

It is imperative within the context of the framing, execution and assessment of prevention initiatives to keep in mind that teenagers share a cultural identity that should also be somewhat taken into account during their developmental years (Walsh et al, 2009). Although the world of adolescents comprises many and various factors such as racial and ethnic backgrounds, family traditions, the peers, and acculturation levels, to which their mentality and behaviours are predetermined. Developing in such circumstances is a person who has continuously changed and diversified his identity through the influence of a culture. The designing, arranging, and evaluation of prevention programs promoting and encouraging the culture of an adolescent is one of the activities of the main priority that should take into account the fact that they reflect one of the social groups. Thus, the focus is made on norms, attitudes, beliefs, and life experiences of the target group. Those programs which choose not to examine or even take into account the surrounding situation may end up in the insensitive imposition of their own culture or way of living the targeted recipient or participants (Hage et al. 2007).

This support programs become significantly more effective in case the collaboration of various disciplines, including community psychology, and social work is united and counseling (Hage et al.,2007; Walsh et al., 2009). This enables people to strive towards transforming their systems at various levels. The significance of this collaboration is hardly overestimated. Through collaborative efforts, individuals are likely to get to know the special conditions of the target community, and this would enhance the appeal of the program and its likelihood of success. In addition, leaders should evaluate the success of the program in doing the specific social justice goals including, cutting down on the socioeconomic injustices (Walsh et al., 2009). Finally, to

achieve the maximum possible audience and the temporary gains that have already been attained, the specialists should realize these programs on a sustained basis (Walsh et al. 2009).

Teen prevention programs that are based on social justice have proliferated in recent years (Wolf, 2005). The multi-tiered approach to social justice by The Boston Connections Program applies to students as well as families, schools, and communities (Walsh et al., 2008). Learners and their families are able to use tools that are aimed at enhancing academic performance, social skill, school and community involvement as well as interpersonal, family and peer support. With a huge reach to the neighbourhoods and schools, the project is carried out by an intervention of high scale which focuses on the risk factors (e.g. hostility and violence) and the protection (e.g. mentorship and service opportunities). The performance of the students' academic improved which in turn increased the community involvement in the school and even the support services boosted to such a great level that it gave a lift to the measurement of this very program. The success rates of the rehabilitation of the segregation program were not very high, however, with the success testing proving that the at-risk students who participated in the project performed better in school than those who did not (Kenny et al. 2009).

The other illustration of a program that endeavors to stop future behavior of the at-risk teenagers with multiple communities is the Communities That Care based program in Pennsylvania (Feinberg et al. 2005). A community-constituted preventive board conducting a special premature risk assessment is one of the key elements of this board in every area. The next move, however, will be to have the respective communities receive their toolbox they will use to stop the issues such as teenage pregnancies, substance abuse, dropouts, and violence. At a community level, social justice can be attained through collective effort of all the stakeholders, through the assistance of community leaders, who would serve as an intermediary between the program and the community.

Another behavior prevention program is Tools for Tomorrow, which focuses on curbing issues among adolescents in the Massachusetts high schools, which are under the Boston sector (Kenny et al. 2007). These children are in city settings and are facing a number of social challenges, racism and poverty are among them. The highlight of an adolescent stage is the successful completion of high school and the focus of the action in Tools For Tomorrow. The members of this program are also getting acquainted with post-baccalaureate education and employment prospects and at the same time are ready to address systemic barriers that result out of societal stratification (e.g., racism, and classism). The program hopes to accomplish

social justice among urban adolescents by eliminating should they drop out of school by offering means to escape the adverse side effects of this action, including continuing the cycle of poverty. Initial findings indicate that teachers noticed an improvement on the capacity of students to make decisions in the process of being in the program (Solberg et al., 2002). The findings of the initial evaluation suggest the decrease of antisocial symptoms, binge drinking, and other risk factors detected (O'Connell et al. 2009). Finally, the intervention will allow change to be introduced at multiple levels because the program has developed a good working relationship between a local college (Boston College) and the community education system.

The Social Justice Theory was chosen in this study as it is directly related to the research interest on vulnerable children and the ethical obligation of social workers. It is based on this theory that there is the focus on fairness, equality as well as redistribution of wealth, which are the most important to the beneficence of children who are regularly deprived and marginalized. The application of the Social Justice Theory places the voices of the social workers in a wider context that puts the emphasis on the equity and safeguarding of rights. Such a theoretical prism also includes a rationale behind the use of qualitative tools, including interviews and focus groups, as an opportunity to investigate lived experiences and discover any systemic inequities in practice. By doing so, not just the ethical orientation of the research is directed by Social Justice Theory, but the approach to gaining various and realistic views practitioners by the researchers is supported by the methodological commitment.

Child Development Theories

When a set of claims with respect to the nature and interconnections of observed phenomena is organized, the set is referred to as theory. A theory is an umbrella approach to assimilating and interpreting evidence. Theory of child development follows and examines the data concerning the way children develop and act. Through analysis of the data, there is an observation of interrelationships among the different factors that affect the growth and behavior of children such as their genetic composition and the environmental conditions. A history of high correlation between early education in childhood and the development of children is long. In order to arrive at well informed decisions regarding the education of the children in terms of their level of development, it is important that the individuals dealing in the field of early childhood education and care have a solid understanding of the child development. The field of child development is not unidimensional and even there is no dominant theory or any set of theories.

Maturation Theory

The maturity theory holds that the genes of a person are the most crucial determinants when it comes to the personalities and personality traits of the offspring. Their genetic potential is increasing on a yearly basis. The harsh conditions of nature cannot forgive them; on the contrary, they only defer but do not create or improve their ability. This approach holds that children must have developmentally appropriate learning experiences. The children discouraged when subjected to unpleasant experiences are unable to learn and develop to their full potential. The guiding idea presented by the maturationists has highly influenced theory and practice in the field of early childhood education. Both the researchers, politicians, and practitioners working in the education sector, have to restructure their view concerning the importance that early childhood development has on their practice with this age group. In their perspective, they have considered development as a natural process that follows predetermined steps (Hunt, 1961). In this perspective, there are numerous professional people who believe that children learn in natural and spontaneous manner as they mature. The shift toward maturationist perspectives was built up due to the works of Arnold Gessell. One of the perspectives during the beginning of the twentieth century, according to which, early childhood education and the study of children were predetermined by genes (Hunt, 1961). Most of the teachers and scientists at that time believed that the genetic composition mainly determined the development of children. They thought that there would be minimal environmental impacts.

Constructivist Theories

However, in its turn, cognitive psychology and, to a greater extent, the constructivist theories that Jean Piaget, Lev Semenovich Vygotsky, and Jerome Bruner have launched have influenced the sphere of early childhood education. Constructivists regard the knowledge that a person has on his experiences as something that is under construction. A child starts to have conception of the world when at about the same time, he or she is born. Having this information they can make greater sense of the environment they come across. Instead, they are assisted to change their knowledge with the new information. Learning and expanding of knowledge whereby new information is continuously being integrated is an aspect that individuals do throughout their life. The physical and social knowledge of children was discovered to be the major information sources and processes (Piaget, 1967, 1971). Physical knowledge consists of the concrete natures and the concrete actions of objects. In the example of a table, e.g., children may learn two things (1) whether the surface is smooth or rough, and (2) whether the top is round or rectangular. To

the children, these are the physical knowledge building blocks that they can have immediate access to through their senses. Social knowledge is constituted by all norms and practices that a society has established. One aspect that children are taught is that it is alright to eat and put things on the table. This data is acquired as a result of logical processes as a component of (Piaget, 1967, 1971) social knowledge (Kamii & DeVries, 1978/1993; Spodek & Saracho, 1994).

Behaviorist Theory

During the early 20th century, it was behaviorism that was the philosophy of child development and learning. It began all with Ivan Pavlov in Russia but in America, B. F. Skinner, Edward Thorndike, and John Watson shaped it. Behavioral theory is an important purpose of describing the learning and development of children (Schunk, 2021). The point is that individuals acquire the knowledge through adjusting their behavior responding to the rewards and drawing associations between the environmental stimuli and their own attitude towards them. Psychologists have suggested that are based on behavioral patterns which developed as a response to a pleasant effect and as such would be attributed to recurrence in the future when they are exposed to similar or close stimuli. Behaviorists measure changes in homoids. Well known behavioral theorist, Edward Lee Thorndike, found out that (1) exercising and repetition will increase response to stimulus and (2) positive rewarding effects are strengthening response. The training programs popular among this type of instructions are the so-called drill-and-practice programs.

One more schools of thought of behaviorism, the invention of B. F. Skinner, was then the emergence of operant conditioning. He assumed that a more intricate behavior would be better repeated in case he was rewarding it to be applied to the correct sections. By so doing, the reinforcers are regulated when the preferred partial behaviors would occur. Many people assume that learning takes place as an estimated sequential or step-by-step event that relies on the implementation of rewards and punishment. The best-known use of the Skinner theory is the so-called programmed instruction where the appropriate order of the particular behaviors to be learnt can be defined with the help of task analysis.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory is informative on the role of the unconscious to the cognition, emotion and behavior of individuals. It is a term used by people to justify their behaviors. As an example, the anxiety of the person may be provoked by his/her unconscious memories about traumatic

events in their childhood, which they brought to the adulthood and became troubled with. Formative events during infancy shape personality and determine the path of life (Alschuler and Hattwick, 1947). By the psychoanalysis thinking, the human abilities are either normal or abnormal, and what occurs during childhood has a permanent influence on the people who grow up to be. Child development, the therapeutic programs of children, and the early childhood education all have been significantly influenced by the psychoanalytic philosophy. In this case, the social-emotional world has been addressed. Freud was the father of the psychoanalytic theory that focused on infancy. The free expression of thoughts and emotions may also be helpful in the mental health of a person. To a child, upon reaching young age, the expressive arts offer them a safe place to give their thoughts and feelings. A child might not be able to bring about some of their more complex ideas and feelings by the use of language at the given age. Children are able to express their ideas or thoughts when they cannot express them using words through art, music, or dance (Alschuler & Hattwick, 1947). Also, children can express themselves with the help of play, and more precisely dramatic play. In doing so when they put themselves into difficult situations, it gives them a means to cope with the unpleasant feelings and solve emotional conflicts that they would otherwise not be able to overcome in real life.

Ecological Theory

One of the major principles the ecological theory holds is the importance of the natural environment in the development and growth of children. Theoretically, the environmental factors influence the growth and development of children in all aspects. In all of them, their environments are peculiar and children might have a hard time in understanding the impact due to the fact that they are mixed up with their usual developing formation. The ecological theory offers an interpretation, categorization, and description of the impact relying on the information about the environment of the children. This plan takes into consideration the events in the ecological psychology field. Child development based on the ecological theory focuses on the macro level, which is the overall influence of the environment on the kid. As children interrelate with the environment around them, their personalities are grown in the form of little, the accumulated extensions. These are holistic views that children are able to build knowledge through the assistance of new experiences and stimuli. The fact that the interests of children are becoming more autonomous is due to the connection that they acquire with the various aspects that influence their personalities (Miller, 2016).

The social justice theories have important implications in shaping the social workers ethics towards the children in need of help and explain the methods associated with equal accessibility of opportunities, the distribution of the resources among citizens correctly, and attempt to achieve fairness and merit in the society. The social workers create their rights and needs through the children who are fragile and are fighting the different elements like social deprivation, abuse, discrimination among others, on the front lines. Equity seeks to have all children catered with the simple and necessary facilities and life chances irrespective of the source of poor and the wealthy. One of the factors concerns fairness, which requires decisions to be factual without discrimination and biases (Miller, 2016). Children are not only to be regarded through their situation but also need numerous resources. They are also the instigators of the liberation of the system against systematic disabilities that result in child warrant, as they present policy changes and social transformations which ultimately results in a fair and tolerant society. Considering such values is included in the task description of social workers who aim at defending dignity and rights of children in danger, attempting to reach outcomes that would correspond with the essence of enhancing equity among all members of the population.

2.2 Theory Of Reasoned Action

Theory of Reasoned Action offers explanations, and predictions of human behavior that is based on subjective norms and attitudes of human beings. TRA has a lot of relevance with the social work, especially in the decision-making processes; in this case, individuals are catapulted in a complex case where there are clashing values, commitments, and probable results. Having been exposed to the light of TRA principles, social workers would be better placed to understand more of their decision-making processes and what exactly drives ethical behavior at that. It should be noted that the attitudes are likely the most significant part of TRA, and define the fact that people can have negative or positive opinions about carrying out specific behavior. Regarding attitude as part of ethical decision making, although social workers may hold some attitude toward certain actions or intervention concerning the attitude based on opinions with respect to the morality or immorality of some actions (Hale et al., 2002). In the case of a social worker, he or she can exhibit a good attitude toward championing the rights of the marginalized since that seems to be in sync with his/her social justice, and equality values. Those attitudes serve as a guide to making ethical decisions especially in matters that affect perceptions of the result and outcome of such doing (Nickerson, 2023). The second TRA construct is that of the

subjective norms, it is the perception the people have about the social pressure or requirements concerning a particular behavior. Subjective norms in the case of social work ethics include the professional standards, values or the norms possessed in the social work profession and any other force carried with societal pressure, organizational policies and cultural expectations. The social worker will have the amount of pressure to adhere to these norms and expectations regardless of how they may be in conflict with his or her values and ethics (Ajzen, 1991). A perception of subjective norms can also enable social workers to critically assess the environmental forces that may be affecting their decision-making process where one has to resist or oppose the compulsions to do what can be termed as questionable in terms of morality.

In addition, TRA focuses on the importance of intention in behavior and ethical decision-making of social workers should be focused on the potential outcome of their actions, the real intentions and motives of such actions. The reflection of their intentions will make the social workers ensure that their actions will be performed on the grounds of ethics and a sincere interest in the welfare of the clients and communities that they serve. This thus means knowing oneself, looking inwards at values, preferences, and inspiration both upon oneself and supervision and consultation by delving into ethical dilemmas in the various perspectives. TRA is also aware that there are other influences on behavior other than attitudes and subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and situational constraints. When used in the social work ethics, perceived behavioral control refers to the beliefs of the social worker about the ability to perform effectively a certain ethical action, and the situational constraints refers to those constraints or facilitators of the performance of such an action in the external environment which may include resource constraints, time constraints and organization constraints (Hale, 2002). It is the responsibility of social workers operating within the framework of the truths to perform their work and ensure the necessary resource and support to represent their rights when ensuring the ethical standards of their practice are observed. The Theory of Reasoned Action will be a superb instrument that can be useful in explaining the ethical decision-making of a social worker. Taking into consideration the role of attitudes, subjective norms, intentions, perceived behavioral control, and situational constraints enables social workers to be competent enough to undergo complex stages of ethical dilemma without losing professionalism and provide standards on behalf of the client and society (Nickerson, 2023). TRA has put a lot of emphasis on self-awareness, critical reflection, and ethical reasoning to guide social work practice on ethical excellence.

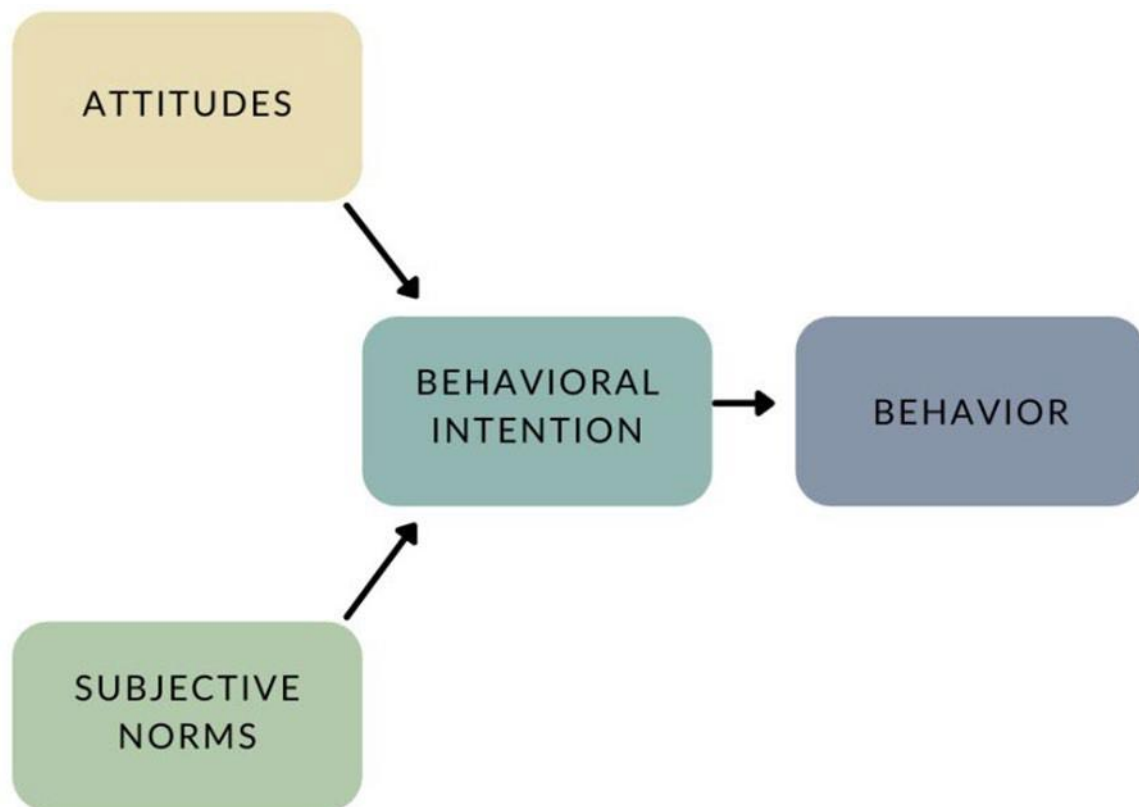


Figure 2: Theory of Reasoned Action Source: (Hale, 2002)

Social workers are deemed to be central to this required action of enhancing social security and human rights of vulnerable children because they are advocates, caregivers, and agents of change. Their ethical practice in this obligation in most instances entails safeguarding, enabling and developing the rights of susceptible and marginalized children. In this regard, it is important to appreciate that the perception of behavioral control, attitude and subjective norms shape the intentions and actions of the social worker in this scenario to help develop the right interventions to help them improve the situation of the vulnerable children. To begin with, the attitude or perception of social workers towards the rights of the vulnerable children influences ethical decision-making process of social workers. Positive attitude to child rights is owed to dignity, insecurity to security and autonomy of children (Conner, 1998). In fact, the social workers, who cannot stop caring about the rights of vulnerable children, are likely to serve their needs, confront their injustices within the system, and engage themselves in activities that enhance measures of the social security. In such a way, the set of attitudes is likely to be reflected in the actions of championing their needs, trying to advance their entitlements in new ways and engaging in activities that will enhance the measures of social security. Concomitantly, attitudes or even indifference towards child rights might inhibit a social worker desire to child abuse,

exploit or neglect children, and thus maintain the vicious circles of destruction and marginalization.

The second group of determinants of the perceived ethical roles of social workers concerning vulnerable children is subjective norms of the social work field and society. The social workers may be under pressure to offer preference to some interventions first or priority to others or to meet the traditional practices, which is not necessarily in the best interests of the children based on professional standards, organizational policies and cultural traditions. Moreover, social workers might also feel implicit or explicit expectations of the colleagues, superiors or community groups with regard to the way they have to tackle the issues of child protection. To comprehend and critically evaluate such subjective norms of a social worker that will enable her or him to pass ethical dilemmas and defend the rights of the vulnerable kids appropriately (Ajzen, 2020). The perceived behavioral control will also influence the intentions and action of social workers, as it will define the degree of confidence that the social worker has placed on his/her ability to positively change the position of unfortunate children. The presence of a qualified well-empowered and supported workforce is likely to have a preemptive effect on the actions of exploitation as well as the implementation of interventions on child protection and wellbeing (George, 2004). Resource constraints, capacity building issues or structural constraints can in turn lower the sense of efficacy of social workers and lead to frustrations and feelings of powerlessness. All the perceived obstacles to social workers will also be contemplated and met out through all means of advocacy, cooperation, as well mobilization of resources in order to build strength of defending and advancing the rights of the vulnerable children. Social workers are ethically obliged to improve the social security and human rights of vulnerable children by advocating the rights of children, confronting systemic injustice and providing effective interventions and help (Hale, 2002). Also, it is significant to determine the clarity of the manner in which the attitudes, the subjective norms, and the perceived behavioral control of the social worker will influence his or her intentions and activities to enhance the effectiveness and the moral validity of child protection. Through this, the social workers can meet their ethical duty of enabling positive attitudes, critical evaluation of subjective norms, and meeting perceived barriers as they will help to provide a safer, more just, and inclusive society to all children.

Ethical Decision Making

Decision making is an important skill in social workers. Ethical challenges prevail in the social work and require profound thinking and scrutiny. An ethical dilemma in a professional context occurs when the two sets of behavior, seeking to apply behind them, are in conflict. Either of them may be good or right. It is due to this inability to understand that the social worker faces difficulty (Linzer, 1999). When working with social workers in ethical situations, it is necessary to read and reflect on the NLASW (2018) Standards of Practice of the Social Worker in NL, the CASW (2005) Guidelines of Ethical Practice, and the Code of Ethics when they are exposed to ethical dilemmas in their professional practice. Additional tools that social workers can gain usefulness through include peer consultation, conversation with a manager or a supervisor, research in the most effective practices, application of models and theories in making ethical decisions, and ethics consultations. This is the advice that can be applied by social workers as the foundation of the CASW (2005) Code of Ethics as well as other professional literature to assist them in making good ethical decisions when confronted with complex ethical situations in their practice (Wilson Marques, 2010). The document provides a template of making an ethical decision and addresses other issues that encourage those who think critically and reflect (Webster, 2000). Social workers can use the content in teaching social work students in the subject, during discussions with colleagues, supervisors, and managers.

This is not necessarily the case in reality, and ethical challenges need solving. The ambiguity and uncertainty are the things, which people have learned in the line of work. There is general excitement among people regarding the opportunity to approach ethical dilemma considering numerous theoretical and professional approaches. In an effort to assist social workers in self-reflection within the framework of their decision-making processes, Antle, (2005) presented a model of elements of ethical decision-making. Social work ethics are influenced by the theories of ethics like deontology, utilitarianism, and consequentialism. A guideline whenever addressing an ethical issue is that of non-maleficence, autonomy, beneficence, and justice, which entail not harm, bring about good, and for a fair and equitable society, respectively. Social workers must consider the theories and concepts that influence their professional ethics in an attempt to make better decisions (Baumann-holzle, 2005). As an example, one can find a line that defines whether the professional compass is more towards the universal rules (deontology), which examines outcomes to reach the greatest good (utilitarianism), or there is a point that lies between (Tubbs Jr, 2009). This is what can help social workers better grasp and respond to the

complex and problematic ethical issues they face that are complex and intersectional. This can assist them in making and justifying their ethical decisions.

The multidimensional nature of social work dictates that the reaction of professionals with regard to ethical issues is influenced by myriads of variables, which include but are not limited to professional responsibility, codes of ethics, practice experiences, individual preferences, organizational/governmental policies, legislations, values, and attitudes. In situations when an apparent ethical option is not apparent, one would have to choose by applying personal judgment and critical thinking abilities (Barsky, 2019). The ethics requirement of the social worker can conflict with agency or even the laws and regulations in certain instances (Noble, 1981). In the face of such a dilemma, social workers will find a solution that will conform to his professional standards of practice and code of ethics. When a social worker feels that he or she has exhausted all other possible ways of solving a problem, he or she then tries to find the right type of advice first before taking any action. A representative or agency they regulate or an experienced colleague, the ethical committee, a supervisor or the legal counsel might be part of this discussion since in most cases social workers are put in a moral dilemma requiring self-contemplation and evaluation making an ethical decision is a vital part of their work. Nevertheless, the solutions to these questions can hardly be straightforward and might return contradictions with their own belief (Dolgoff et al., 2005). Consequently, social workers can be better aware of the preferences of their personal value and more conscious of their priorities among conflicting ethical principles and values as a result of practicing reflexive self-awareness.

The Theory of Reasoned Action was selected due to the fact that it fits perfectly well into the concern of the study in relation to social workers making ethical decisions. TRA is a useful theory in the context of child welfare and analyzing how social workers make professional judgments since TRA involves the impact of attitudes, subjective norms and intentions in influencing human behavior. Ethical practice is very much affected by personal beliefs as well as external influences like the organization or society. The study can base the interview and focus group questions on the underlying attitudes and norms and vice versa by basing the study in TRA. The analysis stage is also reinforced by this theoretical perspective since the study can explain the results regarding individual- and context-related motivations which makes it very appropriate to explain complicated professional dilemmas.

2.3 Human Society Theory

Social Structures and Systems

Social structures and systems refer to a system of elements that are interconnected and in contact with the environment and are what conditions objects in interaction. It is what dictates the shape and structure of the human relations, institutions and organizations in the society. That is to say, structures and social systems generate the frame of reference where individuals have to decide how they will live their lives. This is contextual to even the economic opportunities and cultural norms besides the political processes taking place in the society. The central point of these social structures is social institutions, such as a family, school, religion, and government (Herring, 2023). The institution offers the model of any societal order and a vital component in the construction of the identity, the values, and the behavior of the individual (Singh, 2017). To take an example, the role of the socializing agent is played by the family where the children are taught about the cultural norms, cultural values and beliefs, as well as, developed ideas about relationships and roles that they should play within the society. The education systems also contribute immensely to the social structure since it is carried out with the responsibility of equipping people with knowledge, skills and socialization experiences which help them operate in the society. The institutions would be involved in either reinforcing the social inequalities that were already present or as a social mobility mechanism, according to access, quality, and resources.

Conversely, religion institutes are typically used to fulfill the societal objective both spiritually and socially. They introduce community, belonging, and morals to an individual and can determine the social norms, values, and behaviours. Secondly, the religious institutions may intersect with other social institutions, e.g. politics and the economy, in developing attitudes and policies of societies toward most important questions. The other most significant social structure is that of government and political systems that create rules, laws, and ruling institutions that regulate the processes of the society and manufacture and allocate resources. The form of political systems may be very varied; it may be a democracy and a dictatorship (Herring, 2023). In that manner they exert a massive influence on the rights, freedom and chances of people in the society. Meanwhile, the political structures intersect with any other social system such as economy, education, or healthcare (Morawa, 2003). They control the division of power, wealth and opportunities. Other significant structures which contribute to the development of social institutions and organizations are economic systems i.e. capitalism,

socialism and mixed economies. These systems determine production, distribution, and consumption of resources in society hence determining access to jobs, income, and commodities of people. Economy systems are either entertaining and encouraging inequality or they can be exploited as a social mobility weapon. There are several factors that may influence the economic structures such as market relations, government policy and social institutions. Social systems and structures are challenging and complex; they are predetermined by a complex of historical, cultural, economic, and political factors (Nevard et al., 2021). They have a framework of interaction of people and their groupings in the society; they have an effect on interpersonal relations as well as social institutions and norms. The critical thing now is to be acquainted with these structures and systems and this assists in dissecting the social phenomena, will solve the social problems, and promote the social justice and fairness.

The best example of humanitarian imperative that can assist the helpless with lack of social security and human rights is the psychological trauma of homeless children among other social issues that rest on the hands of social workers. The social workers must understand how the society works in relation to the norms and power regimes that govern distribution of the resources as well as the phenomenon of inequity and objectivity must be debated. The systems and practices, which situate the societies may be economic inequalities and institutional discrimination, resource distribution, and all of that will condition the welfare of the children at risk. Neglected children who belonged to the most marginalized groups, either by being poor, racially discriminated, or homeless, were more susceptible to the social injustices that violate their human rights (Engle, 1996). Other issues encompass poor access to health services, education and other social services thus making one more harmed and exploited.

On its part, it is these conventions within the society that can rise up to the occasion in order to render those individuals who the vulnerable children are. Issues of childhood and family seem to have a lot of stigma, prejudice, and cultural beliefs that predetermine the reaction of the society to children in need of protection and support. As an illustration, child labor or violence to the family may be influenced by cultural beliefs about gender roles or the family duties. The social workers, therefore the workers should intervene with such dynamics, and can offer the necessary care and protection to the vulnerable children, despite offering due regard to cultural identity as well as the need to be independent.

Power is also one of the factors that govern the other facets of the societal institutions such as child welfare agencies, school institutions, and the legal system that determine the experiences

of the vulnerable children and the moral codes of conduct of social workers. Inequality among social workers, families, and other stakeholders in the community in terms of power may affect the decision-making process and the availability of resources and thus affect the rights and well-being of children. The power and privilege in the game played by the social workers also has to be critically analyzed and the social workers have to achieve empowering the ability of children and families in any manner possible so that they too could be part of the scenario as it touches their lives (Alwang, 2001). With the discussion above in consideration, it is in the capacity of the social workers to have ethical duties and responsibilities to the rights, welfare and safety of vulnerable children and, therefore, conduct business with their guiding principle such as autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice in all their operations that concerns children and their families. A social worker ought to defend the accord of the child, assure he/she of no injuries, furnish him/her with material objects and provisions of fundamental services, and ensure that the children are permitted to be heard, known and counted with respect, and with dignity and free of discrimination (Cannon, 2003). Social workers must make efforts to address injustices and inequalities of the system contributing to the exposure of children vulnerability. This can include promoting change in policy and system, questioning the discriminatory process in the administrative facilities, and bearing in mind the social justice and equality in the whole of their work. The social workers are to maintain contact with other professionals, community organizations, and policy-makers, to deliver the vulnerable children and their family with a supportive and protective environment (Morese et al., 2019). It is crucial that how societal structures, norms, and power relations influence the situation of vulnerable children is understood in order to enhance social security and human rights of vulnerable children. The social worker promotes the rights and well-being of the children, has to be dedicated toward adherence to the principles of ethics in practice, and at the same time, overcome the issue of the injustices of the system, and thus, social justice and equality.

Intersectionality

It must also be known that the other people experiences and opportunities are intertwined based on the fact that these various social identities are intertwined. These social identities cross and confuse with each other in personality that constitutes self-idea of an individual and how others see them. This drives to the significance of identifying the way these numerous identities play to the war against systematic inequalities and the pursuit of justice and equity. Race is a type of social category which is not fixed but has historically, culturally and institutionally been affected (Siller, 2022). As an example, racial minorities botanically undergo dissimilar types of

discrimination, prejudice, and institutional obstacles to education, employment, health care, and many other resources. Race also interpenetrates the other kinds of social identities, e.g. gender and class, in a way that enhances inequality and marginalization. Another social identity, gender, like class, has an interaction with race, among other aspects, and influences experiences and opportunities that humans receive in life. Thus, not only socialization is dependent upon the norms and expectations in relation to gender but also the treatment regarding oneself in all social situations and avenues gained. As an example, women, especially women of color and poor families, are subjected to gendered violence, gender pay gaps, and limited representation in a decision-making role.

It also overlaps with race and gender and, therefore, chances and outcomes. Inequality of social and economic nature increases itself with the lack of equal opportunity in schooling, health, housing, and working, and creates mechanisms within the structure that will disperse the life chances unequally and directly influence the well-being of individuals. Individuals with lower social backgrounds are more affected by systemic barriers and obstacles, and this can be separated into a poverty and inequality vicious cycle. This crossing of the race, gender, and class comes with various challenges and experiences of individuals with more than one type of marginalized identity (Samuels, 2008). In comparison, black women traditionally vehemently possess their style of confronting discrimination and persecution in contrast to other black men and white women. However, identity categories like trans, disabled, or other minority groups who joined groups are beneficial and detrimental with intersectional discrimination, and marginalization. Such a comprehension of the intersections and impacts of these multiple social identities would be essential and vital to any schemes whose background would be to combat inequities in societies and achievement of equitable and fair social world among all. The intersectional approach is established according to which various individuals are subjected to various types of opposition that is an outcome of the complicated relationship between social determinants, such as sex, race, and class, etc. It aims at addressing the issues of unequal treatment of individuals and actively struggling against the equal rights. Correspondingly evoking an intersectional stance of reasoning in the presence of multifarious impediments to equality and justice that marginalized communities face, an equality and justice movement may be more inclusive, accomplishing, and empowering to the extent of everyone in the society.

The similarity of social identity characteristics such as race, sex, or class can be related to either increased vulnerabilities (with one group) or advantages (with another) which the interaction in turn influences the experience that will be experienced, the ethics approach is followed within

the social works. It is valuable to understand, therefore, how these multiple identities interact to increase and intensify the challenges people experience to successfully practice, create intervention strategies that can potentially respond to the needs of people, and realize social justice and equity. Through these, intersecting social identities enhance the vulnerabilities and ostracize individuals when it comes to greater exposure to discrimination, oppression, and exclusion (Birbeck, 2021). An example of such is a person being part of a racial minority and being female and falling under the low-income bracket and thus becomes a victim to many discriminations and systems of systemic barriers that severely restrict the access and availability of resources and opportunities by the individual (Siller, 2022). In this instance, the social workers must be knowledgeable about overlapping influences that add to the vulnerabilities of the client and battle intricate processes in the practice. Intersectional social identities will then accrue privilege and advantage to certain individuals but to the disadvantage of other people. An example of this is when people in racially and socio-economically dominant groups enjoy systemic inequalities, which have more resources and opportunities to access, and their social privileges. Socially, social workers, in either scenario, should critically think and evaluate the mechanism of privilege in social system and the interplay of privilege with other forms of identity to perpetuate the inequities and disparities. By doing so, they will be morally liable to work against processes of oppression, and to promote the rights and well-being of marginalized individuals.

The intersection of social identities must inform the social work practice through ethical approaches to the social work practice. It is therefore recommended that social workers undertake aggressive self-reflection and education to be aware of their standards, advantages, and prejudicedness, in the way that their practice can be culturally proficient and peaceful. It is also critical to challenge the assumptions, stereotypes, and discriminatory behaviors inside the social systems and promote the policies and interventions that will respond to the intersecting needs and requirements of the marginalized individuals (Mercat-Bruns, 2017). It is on this basis that social workers ought to use an intersectional approach in any assessment, intervention, or advocacy process aimed at the mirror of the dynamic interaction of the determinants of certain social factors that contribute to the impact on their clients. This, in its turn, could imply the connection to other professionals, community organizations and communities that are at the marginalized stance to be able to design interventions, which are holistic, responsive, and, simultaneously, capable of succeeding in tackling the reasons that precondition inequality in the effort to achieve greater social justice and equity (Mattsson, 2014). Thus, it ought to be

ethical, empowering and transformative and this requires that the experience and voice of the marginalized should be centralized.

The Human Society Theory was added into the framework since it emphasizes the role of wider social structures and institutions- family, education, government, and welfare systems in the behavior of groups and individuals. This is most applicable to the current study, which will look at the impact of systemic inequalities and policy structures on the capacity of the social worker to respect the rights of children. Using this theory, the study recognizes that the ethical obligations are not operated in the vacuum; instead, they are incorporated into social frameworks that facilitate or limit professional action. This theoretical orientation justifies the fact that document analysis should be included in the research design, as policies and institutional guidelines are aspects in the structure that determine practice. It also allows ensuring that findings are not restricted to interpretation only on the micro level in the individual level of decisions but are interrelated with the macro level of social systems which provide a holistic view of the issues that vulnerable children and those working within them have.

2.4 Summary

It is on this background that the paper investigates the theory and application of social work ethics of the category of vulnerable children based on the analytical discourse of the Social Justice Theory. The framework will include discussion on the role of the concepts of social justice on informing the ethical responsibility of social workers towards such children. The Social Justice Theory operates on simple concepts of equity, justness, and equal divide of resources within the society (Wight, 2009). This theory speculates that social workers should meet the immediate needs of vulnerable children and champion the form of change that is systemic so that they can gain equality and justice among the involved parties. The Social Justice Theory used in social work, however, essentially implies the amplification of opportunities and resources that are rather equal to those children, who are vulnerable, and their more privileged counterparts. This refers to education, health care, and housing just to mention a few services (Sue, 2001). This would also be realized in the issue of discrimination practices and structures that simply indulge the disadvantaged children even more, such as poverty, racism and structured discrimination. The social Justice Theory is concerned with the empowerment of the vulnerable children; therefore, it focuses on their active participation in decisions pertaining to their lives (Hage, 2005). This is done by fully realizing that they are full-

fledged people and by making sure that their autonomy is boosted, although, at the same time giving them support and brainstorming with them to help them go through the various systems and the cumbersome blockades they are likely to encounter. With the paradigm, therefore, the social worker will strive to provide an environment that facilitates inclusiveness, and diversity will be appreciated and the welfare of all the children shall be the order of the day irrespective of backgrounds and circumstances.

It is against this very background of the Social Justice Theory that the ethical duty that any social worker owes to these very children ought to have been pegged. The social work practice embracing the principles of equity and fairness, as well as the allocation of resources, direct the work of social practice in this theoretical framework of bringing about change typical of social justice and rightful representations of the interests and welfare of the lowest strata of the society. It is a theory that stresses on the requirement that the system inequalities should be eliminated and that the vulnerable children should be empowered in order to survive in a fairer and more equitable world. The knowledge of the child development theories is also essential as it helps social workers comprehend the peculiarities of need and vulnerability of children experiencing different phases of their development (Abernathy, 2002). Such psychological theories may be used to explain the cognitive, emotional and social development of the children that can be seen as the foundation of ethical interventions and support strategies. As an illustration, the knowledge that Piaget, Erikson and Bowlby formulated theories of cognitive development, psychosocial development and attachment theory can be used by the social worker to learn more on how children view and engage with the world.

The knowledge regarding the theories of child development helps the social worker to customize his/her interventions according to the requirements of the children at the definite stage of development. The emphasis, such as the case of preschool children, may be on such social and emotional skills as they would need at this stage and in the case of adolescents, the emphasis can be on autonomy and identity construction. It is how a social worker may ensure that his or her intervention is correct and considers the dynamic needs. Also, these theories show how experiences of adversity and trauma can make an effect on the development of children (Douglas-Hall, 2006). Better still, the social worker is at a stance to detect indicators of trauma and the possible impact of the trauma experience on the health of the children in the long term. On the basis of such knowledge, there are constructed ethical approaches to interventions, which is essential in terms of providing the environment of the so-called trauma-informed care and offering children the safe and supportive environment in which the healing process is

optimized. It is such theories on child development that social workers must consider in an attempt to be effective in assisting vulnerable children. The awareness of the processes of cognitive and emotional-social development allows regulating the interventions of social workers in a way that would help to solve the specific issues of each age group of a child (Dashiff et al., 2009). To a greater extent, this assists social workers to value the contribution of trauma and misery to the growth of the child and in a sense directs ethical intervention practices that are mainly aimed at restoration, toughness and empowerment.

A critical analysis of the associated literature on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to the social work domain presents a major chance to interpret how attitudes, subjective norms, and a sense of control of the social workers are engaged in the development of their treatment intentions and behavior that prioritizes the protection and wellness of the children with special needs (Kenny, 2009). The TRA argues that people who get positive attitudes towards the behavior would most likely perform the behavior willingly and the subjective norms could forecast their behavior. and what they see can be a significant determining element in their action. The social workers notions regarding their attitude toward the struggles in child response would also influence the intentions and actions of the social workers at the social worker level. The decision made is whether the social worker tends to be a champion of the rights of the child or not and the aspects of behavior are then determined towards supporting the rights that are defended (Walsh, 2009). Conversely, they are likely to kill support to the needy children in case they are not nice. Social worker attitudinal determination will help in the intervention formulation that will override any preconceived notions or bias that can hinder social workers.

Perceived behavioral control is a self belief of a person with regard to his or her capability in performing a behavior. This in the context of social work entails aspects like self-efficacy, resources and external constraints that may act to limit the efficacy of the social workers in the situations that may arise to enable them to effectively advocate on behalf of vulnerable children. The obstacles to action are to be eliminated and the power that social workers have on their practice enhanced, so that they can overcome the various forms of challenges and address their professional and ethical responsibilities with helpless children. The Theory of Reasoned Action applied to social work presents us with a framework on the way social workers in the exercise of their professional intervention in the protection and promotion of the rights of vulnerable children, develop their intentions and act within the attitudes, the subjective norms as well as the perceived behavioral control (Descamps et al., 2000). The challenge of perceived behavioral

control will result in more willful, more responsible, and more productive advocacy of the rights of vulnerable children to their social security and human rights.

This is what is debated about how the TRA framework can be applied by social workers as to why their decisions must be ethical, in which the interests of the vulnerable children and their rights should be taken into consideration. It involves contemplations on how such choices will affect personal values and professional standards under the influence of the social requirements. According to the theory, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions on behavioral control constitute the intentions of people to act in a specific way. The mindset of the social workers regarding the security and advocacy of the well-being and the rights of the vulnerable child is of great importance in the circumstances of making ethical decisions (Piaget, 1971). As much as the social workers feel positive towards the ethical principles of respect and the needs of the child taking precedence, then they are likely to pre-dispose themselves to make choices that will go in line with the principles. The social workers will foster care ethical practice and lay a flag in advocating the rights of the vulnerable children through the articulation of the role of attitudes in directing ethical practice. The ethical decision making processes of a social worker are also influenced by social pressures and in the terms of the TRA model, these are the perceived social pressures to do or not to do a certain action (Spodek, 1994). They include peer expectations, supervisor expectations, expectations of professional bodies, and society with regards to how the vulnerable children are treated. A social worker needs to intersect the subjective pressures with ethical obligations to cross the alternating and complex interests to provide the best services to the well-being and rights of the vulnerable child.

There is also the element of perceived behavioral control which involves the beliefs of the ability to accomplish a behavior and it too affects the process of ethical decision-making greatly. Strong perceived control by the social worker -that she is able to operate within the confines of ethically acceptable conduct and a representative of the rights of vulnerable children in the adversity of adversity or limiting constructs is needed. It will deconstruct obstacles to action and enhance the feeling of control of the process of making ethical decisions (Feinberg, 2005). This will as well improve the capacity of social workers to confront the challenges and fulfill the requirements as stipulated by the ethical commitment to vulnerable children.

Applying the Theory of Reasoned Action to the ethical decision-making framework where the social work falls under the concept will provide a framework within which the influence of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control of behavior will assist in determining the

intention of, and action by, social workers on matters concerning the well-being and entitlements of the vulnerable children. A major role of the social worker would be to take into account individual values, professional ethics, and social norms when making conscious and ethical decisions aimed at the benefit of the vulnerable child and fulfillment of his/her best interests according to the wish of protection and empowerment by the rest of society.

The inherent question on exploring the extent to which the structures, norms, and power distribution in the society can influence the experience of vulnerable children is the basic basis on addressing the moral necessity of social worker with concerns on the best interest of children. The legal, cultural, and economic structures are so influential in the well-being and rights of the vulnerable children that they further propagate inequalities and obstacles to the needed resources and opportunities of the vulnerable children (Herring, 2023). The inequalities of the system, poverty or racism or gender difference, etc., may also discriminate children with disadvantaged backgrounds even more in other spheres. All these are structures that operate jointly in the subjects of marginalization of vulnerable children and intensification of their vulnerability in the societies. By this, it means that it is only possible after the social work fraternity opens their eyes on the issues that are tied with these structures and systems and challenges the status quo to do a right thing in order to address the needs of the vulnerable children. Furthermore, the issue of power in the society is also influential in determining the ethical duties of social workers toward the vulnerable children (Morawa, 2003). Additionally, the ethical considerations of social workers touching on vulnerable children are dictated by the power relationship in the society because most of these professionals operate under various bureaucracies and systems of child welfare, institutions of learning and health practitioners. The dynamics of power within these systems are also involved in the decision-making of these systems, their allocation of resources, and intervention relating to children at risk.

Moreover, the social workers are expected to be culturally sensitive; that means, they are expected to be sensitive to the cultural settings on which they practice with vulnerable children due to the fact that the manner in which the vulnerable children are handled may be at cross roads with the cultural norms of the society. After recognizing the role of the systems, norms, and power, social workers can then take the additional step of lobbying the need to change the systems so as to encourage social justice and ensure the vulnerable children have their human rights upheld (Engle, 1996). The interpretation of the societal structure, norms and power relation on the experiences of at-risk children is significant to the ethical responsiveness of the social workers to these individuals. Social workers are supposed to operate in these diverse and

complex environments with concern towards culture and a desire to promote social security and human rights among the vulnerable children.

This is a valuable insight on a discourse about intersectionality: the interactions between various forms of social identities such as race, gender, or class, among other factors, to create the vulnerabilities or privileges of a vulnerable child to compound or prevent damage. It is intersectionality through which one understands how individuals can possess multiple and overlapping regimes of subjection, as well as privileged position, to act in their lives, which can rather certainly proceed to influence their experiences and access to resources in society. In the case of vulnerable children, intersectionality highlights the collision of race, gender, and classes among other identity differences that results in either privilege or marginalization experiences. As an example, a child who belongs to a marginalized racial or ethnic group would have greater access to education and health and other social services, knowing that most probably, there has been racism and discrimination at a system level (Mercat-Bruns, 2017). In the same way, a child born in a family with low income will have additional vulnerabilities due to the problems related to poverty which will cross the other social identities influencing his well being and prospects. The intersectional informed approach is essential when formulating ethical courses of the social work practice involving the children who live under vulnerabilities. The social worker would have to value the multiplicity of the child identity and experience combined with how the various shapes of oppression would intertwine in establishing the reality of the child. Consequently, social workers will also be able to evaluate in their practice in a more specific way the needs and difficulties a child has to offer, as well as formulate intervention measures which will cover the layers of marginalization of such a child.

Besides, an intersectional approach will put social workers in a better position to champion systematic change that will be probing at the downs of oppression and inequity. Through combating structural constraints and to policies and practices that would enhance equity and social justice to all children regardless of their overlapping social identities, social workers may struggle in the creation of more accommodating and equitable systems where human right and dignity of vulnerable children can be fulfilled. Moreover, intersectionality plays a critical role in the meaning of the intersection of multiple social identities to amplify the vulnerability or privilege of vulnerable children (Siller, 2022). As soon as the intricacies of the situation linked to the vulnerable children have been decoded, and the correlation between oppression and privilege have been identified, social workers will be able to develop a more ethical approach towards practice and introduce the concept of promoting change within the system to foster

equities and social justice. There is a necessity to have a sense of the overlapping aspects and how they lead to the experiences of children and how to act in the context of the dream of a better and more-inclusive and fair system of all.

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview Of The Research Problem

The research problem of the study involved the ethical aspects of social workers relating to the improvement of social security into human rights of children at risk. Most children still tend to remain victims of various forms of child abuse by those in their lives that are supposed to be their guardians. One of the biggest fields of social workers is child welfare and protection as people are the first-line professionals disabled to facilitate the rights and needs of such vulnerable children and ensure that people receive the most appropriate services and care. Nevertheless, theories and practice suggest that child welfare practice is an extremely difficult field to these workers because of issues that encompass ethical concerns, legal concerns as well as resource dearth among others. So, the question that will be addressed within the context of this research is the ethical aspects of social work within the domain of child welfare and the identification of potential methods and strategies, which can enhance work effectiveness of social workers and improve social protection and human rights of the needy children (Erin, 2016). Among the aims of the research, the review of the role of ethical framework and decision-making on the efficacy of social work in child welfare together with the generation of effective solutions are included.

The other significant research issue is to establish the underlying ethics which guide the practice of social work among abused children (Young et al., 2012). These tenets cover considerations and encouragement of human dignity, social justice, cultural sensitivity, and the principle of paramount importance of the best interest of the child in case of making decisions and action that relate to child care sphere. In this way, speaking of such ethical principles, this work is supposed to clarify the moral axiology underlying the social work practice dealing with children and families, and the values and beliefs which are placed on the foundation of the professional choice and action. The awareness of these principles will give a clue on how to effectively address professional roles and good ethical practices to effectively practice effectively and ethically as a social worker (Bryant, 2009). The interpretation of the above four fundamental ethical principles will also facilitate in the analysis of ethical environment in which the social workers operate and how the principles serve the purpose of protecting and promoting the interests of the needy children.

Another significant aspect is the analysis of the issues related to the ethical activities of social workers and the problems that they have to face when working with the children in question. Social workers might be conflicted ethically in cases where there are various principles, duties or values which are all viable and no clear method of establishing the type of principle, duty or value to be utilized. Issues of client confidentiality and sharing information, parental rights and responsibilities, cultural differences, and limits are only some of the most frequent examples of the common ethical dilemmas of a social worker working in a child welfare environment. This study will, therefore, illuminate the inclinations of moral decision making in social work on child protection by establishing the central morality issues and controversies in social work (Sabates-Wheeler, 2006). It will also assist to see and read the realities of a Social Worker, but with a particular emphasis given on the challenges, the worker is exposed to and how the worker can manage those situations in the most humanistic and ethical way. These components will also aid in the recognition of conflicts of ethics in the social work practice and consequently will be useful in formulation of guidelines and training modules that would serve ethical social working practice in protecting children and child advocacy.

Moreover, this research issue presupposes investigating the impact of ethical social work practice on the safety of children and their families who are in dire need of assistance (Orr, 2014). Among ethical social work practices were the necessity of recognizing the rights and dignity of every child, need to champion on the quest of justice and fair treatment to the children and the need to pursue the cause of those children who might have been deprived of their rights. This research will therefore attempt to determine the connection between ethical considerations and potential positive effects on the child based on a perspective to claim the need to embrace ethics as one of the key elements of the practice of social work. This will entail establishing a healthy relationship with the children and their families and association with their self-determination and cultural beliefs and giving them a voice through which they can be represented and have their interests and wellbeing safeguarded by the larger societal and political structure. The need to determine the relevance of ethical practice to achieve desirable results to children is a vital part of this research; the research will give evidence-based recommendations, which will enhance the achievement of ethical outcomes in the field of social work (Bryant, 2009). In turn, the study will assist in the increased accountability to the social security and human rights of vulnerable kids in terms of renewing the ethical accountability of social workers and promoting the understanding of the most effective

methods and approaches that would prove potentially useful in ensuring that the practice of social work can become more effective when it involves child protection (Goldingay, 2020).

3.2 Operationalization Of Theoretical Construct

The social justice theory applies to the framework under discussion due to the explicit potential of the concept and the implications of social injustice on how the adolescence period should be handled. The theory recognizes the way conditions in mental, emotional or behaviour disorders, retarded development of intelligence, poor physical well-being or other negative experiences are compounded by poverty, structural and relationship dysfunction which define the majority of families (O'Connell et al., 2009). These are unfavourable situations that affect the youth particularly the minority, and the youth who have low families of origin as well. Child and youth poverty induced by the United States is still on the increase - The pauperism prevalence of families with adolescent poverty rose in the years 2000 and 2008 by 33% to 36% among low-income families with adolescents (Wight and Chau, 2009). These kids survive in an environment with poor facilities like playgrounds, art galleries and council libraries, more cases of violence that adversely affect their healthy development (O'Connell et al 2009).

TRA can also be referred to as the Theory of Reasoned Action since it can explain and forecast human behavior using and based on human attitudes and norms. TRA can be highly applied in social work situations particularly those that have a dilemma that balances one aspect over the other or alternatively various anticipated results. Given that social workers must take daily decisions, which might or might not affect ethical norms and standards, an understanding of the TRA practices aids in enhancing the realization of daily activities. Perceived control is significant in TRA as it quantifies the degree of trust that people have on the probability of their doing the behavior (Sabelnikova, 2016). Regarding the ethical approach, the attitudes are views on particular activity, states or an intervention in the field of social work on whether it is ethical or unethical. Indicatively, during employment as a social worker, one can advocate the rights of certain classes of individuals because of the principle of wrong versus right that cause the individual to adopt the right ethical standard (Nickerson, 2023). Attitude is not directly related to behavior but it combined with the intention variable of the user. Understandable effects of the actions meant to be applied on the practice of social work, and the potential effects that would likely be caused by the said measures, are some of the aspects common standards as to

what should be taken into consideration in reaching ethical decisions, according to the concepts of intentionality. The social workers ought to think of the intent behind their good intention which directs their behaviours in accordance with the General National Standing Order ethical principles (Wright et al., 2012). It involves need of an individual in the sense of self-assessment and evaluations on the values and attitudes of the community and the motivations of why one has undertaken the practice of professional supervision and consultation with the view of ethical analysis of some situations.

The social structures and systems are resources made up of aspects interlinked with each other and acting as efficient factors that determine the shape and the hierarchy of interpersonal relationships amongst people as well as the institutions and organizations in the society (Udo-Akang, 2012). These forms are behind the possibilities of economic growth, the positions that are permissible and anticipated by individuals of the contrary sexes, and even the democratization. The family, education, religion, and the government are some of the key areas of the core social institutions (Herring; 2023; Emmerich et al., 2016). These institutions constitute the society and of high significance in accomplishing order and form in the society by giving a person identity, values and behaviours.

3.3 Research Purpose And Question

Social workers, based in this area, will find the ethical need very essential in understanding the social security and human rights of children at risk in this country. The recent past has been characterized by what can be described as increasing interest in the role of social workers particularly in the protection of the vulnerable children and the aged as well as in advancing their rights. Nevertheless, the other issues of the child welfare need additional efforts and solutions, such as poverty, inequality, prejudice, and social exclusion (Alston, 2020). Thus, to address such issues and to legitimize the rights and protection in endangered children, this research paper sought to evaluate the social work ethical concerns. This investigation considers the ethical obligations of child welfare and protection social workers since no literature and research lack after this area (Singh, 2020). The ethical principle that requires adherence to human dignity, the advocacy of social justice, and the welfare of children are some of the elementary ethical standards that are being exercised by social workers who have pursued their career in their paths. Also, it tries to cover ethical concerns, which arise whilst working within

the welfare service sector, especially those cases involving the youth in difficulties and how one could address such matters fairly and sincerely.

Research Questions

- What are the key ethical obligations of social workers in promoting the social security and human rights of vulnerable children?
- What challenges do social workers face in fulfilling these obligations, and how do they navigate ethical dilemmas in their practice?
- What strategies or interventions show promise in enhancing the effectiveness of social work practice with vulnerable children?

3.4 Research Design

Research design may be defined in research methodology as the broad outline, which must be adhered to in order to address the research problem and also find out how and what to utilize in order to address the research problem. It explains the structure of a certain research and how and where data will be collected, measured, and analyzed to answer the research questions or hypothesis in a significant way.

Types of research design

Experimental the research designs are considered as some of the rejoiced which can be causally correlated through the manipulation and control of variables used in establishing causality between variables, cross-sectional where the relationship that exists between two or more variables is explored though the population can not be manipulated, longitudinal where the research questions and objectives are met, and current where case, and various other types are chosen based on the nature of the research questions and objectives.

Chosen method

The present research uses a qualitative science methodology in which data collection methods such as interviews, group discussions, and discussion of documents are used to get an enriched source of data on perceptions of social workers as far as working with vulnerable children are concerned. This method is chosen because it reflects the nature and specifics of social work

practice because it includes all the factors to comprehend the working and operating conditions of the social worker and the existing environment of social security system. The primary and primary form of data will be collected by conducting interviews of ten volunteer social workers- it will be structured to be conversational semi-structured interviews. Such physical interviews will consequently allow the respondents the opportunity to elaborate on the experiences of incidences among the interviewers that they have experienced or observed within the localities where the study will be undertaken thus resulting in a broader interpretation of various emotions (Sileyew, 2019). This practice of the semi-structured interview format offers guidance to the topics encased in the interview, and at the same time offers freedom to any further topics that may arise in an interpersonal conversation. Another qualitative research method that will be utilized to complement the interviews is focus groups, which will provide a much-needed group, social, environment where the social workers can discuss issues and challenges with their practice through and the strategies they prefer, and the other participants can provide feedback (Abutabenjeh, 2018). The interactive interview method through focus groups can determine practices practiced in common or a gap that defines the practices and can facilitate the existence of differences or the variation in practice matters or in the process of process implementation within the occupation. Such an approach will also prove helpful to explain how SC workers can help each other in this role.

The analysis of the study will be applied in the review of policies, standards and guideline of OrphFund; the case documents of the body and several policies that guide the social security control of children requiring parental care as well as protection. Such an approach provides the background and previous information that serves as a verification checkpoint to the data collected in interviews and focus groups (Sileyew, 2019). The study is able to identify the working practices of client policy intentions where there are client policy intentions correspondence, and client divergence. The justification of such a qualitative research approach in the study is a successful, comprehensive identification of ethical obligations and practices of the social workers and the effectiveness of the existing measures of social security as an option offered by the law to secure vulnerable children (Tobi, 2018). Integrating both methods of interviews, focus group discussions, and document review helped to gain more insight into the research problem, which can be handy to be utilized in further policy-making and educative activities within a collective of professionals in the sphere of social work.

3.5 Population And Sample

Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling method involved contacting and enlisting social workers practicing in different establishments such as non-governmental bodies, child protection organizations or departments, and private practice, among others. Some of the criteria that was used in sample selection include a number of years of experience in child welfare practice, current direct practice with children and young people in vulnerable situations and willingness to be included in the research. In this regard, the study intends to collect data from participants with a satisfactory understanding of the aspects, concepts, or issues under review from the viewpoint of the various criteria mentioned above (Mishra, 2011). Besides individual interviews, focus groups will also be conducted with selected social workers to be identified. Such focus group participants will include individuals from different stations and organizations so as to accommodate a wider range of discussions and perspectives. It not only enhances the quantity of information but offers a chance to consider the tendencies and cooperation schemes within the frame of the social work profession while considering children's rights. This makes purposive sampling appropriate for the study since it aims at capturing different experiences and opinions from multiple persons who are usually involved in social work specifically in child protection (Pandey, 2021). This approach ensures the credibility and richness of the research outcomes making a contribution toward a better understanding of the issues faced or steadfastly embodied in regard to enhancing social security and human rights of vulnerable children.

Sample Size

The determination of the sample size is a critical step in ensuring the reliability and validity of any research study. For this study, the sample size was calculated using Cochran's (1977) formula, which is widely used for determining sample sizes when dealing with large populations or populations of unknown size. This method ensures that the sample selected is statistically adequate to represent the target population of social workers and practitioners engaged in promoting social security and human rights for vulnerable children.

Cochran's formula is expressed as:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 p q}{e^2}$$

Where:

n_0 = required sample size

Z = standard normal deviation corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for 95% confidence)

p = estimated proportion of the population possessing the attribute (assumed to be 0.5 for maximum variability)

q = 1 – p = 0.5

e = desired margin of error (0.05) Substituting these values into the formula:

Substituting these values into the formula:

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times (0.5) \times (0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$
$$n_0 = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025}$$
$$n_0 = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} = 384.16$$

Hence, the minimum required sample size for the study was 384 participants.

However, to enhance the robustness of the findings and to account for potential non-responses, incomplete surveys, and data inconsistencies, the researcher increased the sample size to 412 respondents. This adjustment provided additional statistical power and ensured better representativeness of the target population.

Therefore, the final sample size used in this study was $n = 412$, which is sufficient to generate reliable, valid, and generalizable findings. This sample size also meets the recommendations of the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table, which specifies that a minimum of 384 participants is appropriate for populations exceeding 10,000 at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. The chosen sample size thus ensured that the study results are both statistically sound and empirically credible.

3.6 Participant Selection

Table 1: Key Criteria for participant selection

Selection Criteria	Details
Years of Experience	Minimum of 3 years of professional, para-professional, or associate-level experience in child welfare.
Professional Background	Participants must be involved in social work, child adoption, or other social services with expertise in child rights and protection.
Practice Settings	Participants will be recruited from diverse settings, including non-profit organizations and government institutions handling child protection.
Participation in Child Welfare or Human Rights Initiatives	Must have significant experience in initiatives related to child welfare or human rights, particularly in promoting children's rights and well-being.
Diversity in Clinical Settings	Participants are expected to come from a variety of practice environments to ensure a versatile understanding of social work trends and organizational structures.
Ethical and Practical Knowledge	Participants should have a solid understanding of ethical and practical approaches essential for child welfare practice.

The targeted participants for this study will be purposively selected to increase the probability of attaining highly qualified participants, who practice social work, child adoption, or other social services while also having expertise in child rights and protection. The first one is years of experience in the field of child welfare concern and will play a significant role in choosing those who will offer their services in this sector. Each participant must meet at least three years of professional practice at the professional, para-professional level or any other associate level directly involved in working with vulnerable children. This criterion guarantees that the participants have adequate encounters with the difficulties and complications of child service work and that participant are in a precise position to bring comprehensive and factual remarks regarding their practices and the efficacy of social security steps. To this end, years of

experience will be one method of selection and participants will be intentionally recruited from diverse practice settings (Reybold et al., 2013). The sample population selected for the study is expected to feature social workers who are engaged in non-profit organizations advocating for the rights of the vulnerable and government institutions that handle child protection. The diversity of these settings is beneficial in that it helps to fetch out the versatility present in the working trend of the social workers and the number of ways in which people are employed in tandem with specific organizational structures (Wan, 2019).

In addition to demographic characteristics, to be selected as a participant, one should also participate in initiatives concerning child welfare or human rights. Specific position preferences are also stated only candidates with significant experience in carrying out the project and program activities related to the promotion of children's rights and well-being will be considered as the priority. This criterion guarantees that each of the participants has previous experience working with children and is an active participant in the fight against the challenges that affect the lives of vulnerable children. By participating in such measures, people demonstrated a greater appreciation of core ethical probes and practical approaches essential for child welfare practice. Years of experience, diversity in clinical settings, and prior involvement in child welfare and human rights initiatives remain relevant and reliable criteria in finding the participants for the study (Melvin & Lenarduzzi et al., 2021). This methodology allows for the accumulation of rich and detailed data, which is essential in understanding the contemporary status of social security and human rights of vulnerable children alongside the SE-determined moral responsibility of social workers in this regard. Able selection of participants will ensure that people share different views and experiences in solving the research problem, hence ensuring a holistic study.

3.7 Instrumentation

Table 2 Instrumentation and key elements

Aspect	Details
Main focus	Ethical responsibilities of social workers in protecting the rights and welfare of vulnerable children.
Research purpose	To explore the views, approaches, and challenges faced by social workers in ensuring child protection.

Research methods	- Interview guides - Focus group protocols
Interview guidelines	Designed to collect unbiased, detailed, and holistic information from social workers - Will include general questions on experiences and challenges in child protection
Focus group	Encourage group discussions to reveal patterns in professional practices - Promote self-observations and exchange of ideas on improving social security and child protection

Aspects	Details
Key Ethical Responsibilities	- Upholding human rights and social security of children - Making legal decisions to safeguard children's rights - Addressing long-term safety and protection
Challenges Faced	- Limited resources - Organizational issues - Cycle of oppression
Standards of Practice	- Based on principles like worth and dignity of the person, pursuit of social justice, and code of ethics
Potential Outcomes	- Identifying areas for policy and practice improvement Suggesting required changes to enhance social security and human rights for children
Expected Contribution	Help design better treatments and services for marginalized children - Inform policy modifications for improving child welfare

Ethical Importance	- Central to the profession and child protection Research aims to highlight strengths and weaknesses in current practices
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Practitioners undertake important roles with the role of protecting the rights of the child. The social worker ethics in this aspect is complicated and extends to the preservation of human rights, as well as social safety of vulnerable and endangered children, who are most endangered and vulnerable. This research project aims at discovering the perceptions, pronunciation and practices that the social workers adopt in managing the above challenges. The interview guides and the focus group protocols will be required to be structured in such a way that the entire research queries can be addressed in a coherent and uniform manner providing a broader picture of the problem and its potential solutions in the research area. One of such sensitive areas is child protection where social workers are typically on the front there to defend vulnerable children (Ife, 2022). They also work in schools, hospitals, and in community centers among many others to serve the requirements of needy children. These are the objectives of facilitating habitation education, healthcare, and safety, and child rights and welfare protection. The social workers are never operating in a vacuum and they face lots of difficulties when attempting to take care of children in need. Such limitations may include the following; scarcity of resources, internal organizational problems, and the pre-established revival of oppression which keeps these kids incarcerated (Banks, 2020). The ethical demands of social workers represented in the professional regulation consists of the standards of practices that are premised on principles like the worth and the dignity of the person, the enhancement of social justice, and the code of ethics. Social workers should operate within a legal context, as they are obliged to keep the rights of the children they represent, and in some cases, make some unpleasant choices that would enforce the rights of the children (Sanders, 2021). This involves trying to not only diminish the existing problems but also coming up with a method of the further care of the basic needs of any child in order to create long-term security and safety of the children who cannot be safe by their families. This is the area, in which people must struggle to protect the right policies, which would affect the causes of societal insecurity and human rights abuses in an attempt to bring about a positive change that would impact all children in the future.

That is why, using knowledge provided by such professionals directly, in researching the topic of the current study, which is burdened with the ethics of social workers, it is significant. The

interview guides and focus group protocols that will serve as checklists of the type of data to be gathered where required will be created to achieve this. These tools will be created to gather details about what social workers experience and what they feel in them when working with or on behalf of vulnerable children, and what their techniques are when working (Maylea, 2021). The interview guides will consist of open-ended questions that will invite the emotions and thoughts of the social workers without being influenced, thus making the information detailed and comprehensive about the successes and challenges the social workers encounter in their practice. The study will improve on the use of individual interviews by facilitating a group discussion among the sampled social workers by the focus group protocols (Ringson, 2020). Thus group discussion could also supplement the information received after the survey by pointing to the common tendencies of professional practice and attitude of social workers and their discrepancies. Such an approach will also assist the members to come up with self-observations and reason in other various creative alternatives in which social security and human rights of vulnerable children can be improved. Thus, in an effort to augment the discussion on the profession, the social workers can be assisted by the use of focus groups to talk about their experiences and thoughts on ethical imperatives and dilemmas in practice.

The data received during interviews and focus groups will be qualitatively coded with the help of thematic analysis to provide parallels between the perceived ethical action of social workers by the participants. The results of this analysis can be used to devise the correct method of improving social security and the human rights of the vulnerable children. It will also determine the fields where more support and resources are needed, which can be helpful in proposing the necessary amendments to the policy and practice. As the aim of this study is to determine the perceptions and experience of social workers, the given study can be used in planning more appropriate treatments and service to marginalized children (Rodrigues, 2020). The profession and child protection are based on ethical principles that are associated with profession-related functions and duties of a social worker. It is in this light that the purpose of this study is to highlight the shortcomings and achievements of the social workers using their perspective. Interview guides and focus group protocols will minimize the possibility of Bias and enhance credibility of the study because the information to be collected will be as relevant as possible to develop a generalized impression about the strategies and approaches applied by social workers. The research results will be useful to improve and adjust the social security and human rights policies in the best interests of the vulnerable children.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

With the help of social workers, there is creation of awareness and advocacy of the rights of endangered children. Considering the ethical framework of the work of a social worker, the reviewed activities are multifaceted and entail the growth of social security and human rights of children that are typically stigmatized and profit. The overall aim of the study is to learn, as perceived by social workers, the issues, methods, and ways of approaching the issues (Rambaree, 2020). The data collection method will be involved in administration of the focus groups and semi-structured interviews among the chosen respondents. In addition to the interview information, the policy reports, organizational guidelines, and case studies will undergo analysis to enhance the findings of the study. Such approaches will assist in making a cohesion and defining the problems of research and their solutions in this field in an organized manner. The social workers will be at the forefront when a case involving the protection of children who are vulnerable arises (Anand, 2022). Under most of them is the employment in schools and hospitals and community centres, where they assist children who are subjects of other hard situations. It touches on activities related to education, health, secure accommodation, and all the areas of the safety of children and their human rights. Social workers encounter a lot of barriers to help vulnerable children and working on various systems. These can be shortage of resources, organizational factors, policies and practices which still continue to marginalize these children.

Legal items that govern the behavior of social workers include such principles as respect of a person and his/her values, obligation to deliver justice and integrity among others. The vulnerable group: the children are immediately associating with the social workers who are mandated with the task of doing the right thing on behalf of the children yet doing the right thing often involves the use of the unwritten Talmadge precept and making decisions that may not be palatable. This is not only thinking about the day to day requirement, but also the progressive thought about the planned approach that is to assist the kid or kids in question to have as fruitful a future as possible. Social professionals should also serve as a champion of the policy overhaul over social insecurity and social abuse of human rights toward attaining an appropriate world to all children (Pizzi, 2020). In offering information related to the study about the ethical duties of the social workers, it would be right to seek information among the interested parties in this area. Here, semi-structured in-person interviews will be administered to the social workers to provide significant information regarding their impressions and experiences (Gordon, 2020). The questions in such interviews will be general and will allow

the social workers to speak their mind and experiences out in order to provide the researcher with a close-up success and challenges report on their work. The semi-structured approach to the interviews will ensure that although there will be structure to the interviews, some elements will be taken into consideration and explored further depending on the respondent.

The individual interviews will also be complemented by the focus group protocols since the viewpoints of a number of social workers will be explored in the focus group discussions. The goals and attitudes that define social workers could be compared as such group discussions may unveil other aspects of social workers activity. It could also assist in convincing various social work agencies to start considering the proposals of the authors about the creative ways in which social security and human rights of disadvantaged children can be promoted (Brownlee, 2020). Focus groups can also be used to get a better understanding of the major ethical obligations and the primary issues that can arise concerning the social workers during their practice. In addition to interviews and focus group discussions, other written text such as policy documents, organizational/ legal framework guidelines and other non-prominent cases will be utilized. These documents may provide the knowledge and data that are used to uncover more decision-making of social workers and their tactics (Okafor, 2021). The general policies and laws that guide the profession of social workers may be known in policy reports whereas the specifics of working can be known in organizational policies. Probably, it would be more productive to provide case scenarios, which illustrate how particular issues are managed by people working in social work with references to ethical standards.

It is a method that is employed, owing to applying interviews, focus groups, and documents and is critical in making sure that the research provides an ethical obligation of a social worker in various strain. The information acquired through those will then be synthesized to assist in establishing the usual themes and trends in terms of the strategies that can be considered the most effective ones in improving social security and human rights of vulnerable children (Mencutek, 2023). The outcomes of this examination will be applicable to decide on the particular areas that should be advocated, and more services that need improvement, which will further result in the alteration of some of the policies and practices. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will enable the development of new more effective tools and strategies to assist needy children and assist social workers with a better perspective of their role. Supporting the significance of the well-established ethical duties of the social workers, one can bring up the idea that their main agenda consists in the preservation of the right of vulnerable children (Dudley, 2020). Therefore, the ES knowledge acquired within the framework of the

experiences of social workers in the scope of the blind spot analysis can give an idea of the challenges and success of the field. Hence, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions and documents will be used to collect general and comprehensive data. As a result, this study will be useful in drafting superior public policies and practices subsequently securing the children in social security and championing their rights.

Data Triangulation Process

This study will use a triangulation approach to the data to ensure the credibility and reliability of the final results. Triangulation helps to provide information on the validity of other sources, as the data provided by the specific source can be compared with the data provided by the other sources of information, which in turn minimizes bias and enhances validity. Particularly, three main types of information were gathered: (i) semi-structured interviews with social workers, (ii) focus group arguments with a number of practitioners, and (iii) the documentary information on the matter, including organizational policies, legal frameworks, and case records.

The insights offered by each of these sources are different. Interviews give more intensive and personal account of the ethical practices and dilemma of social workers and a focus group can promote collective reflection and enable comparison of experiences among the group of respondents, documents documents can give a formal and institutional outlook of standards, policies, and procedures. The study determines convergences and divergences by comparing and contrasting these several datasets. Considering this, an ethical issue noted during interviews could be verified against its expression during the discussion in the focus groups and proven through the organizational policy documents.

The triangulation was done in three steps. To begin with, thematic analysis was independently coded to obtain data in each approach. Second, the repetitive trends of the various sources were compared and synthesized. Contradictions were not rejected, but made to be analyzed further to gain knowledge of the contextual difference like the difference between the urban and rural practitioners. Lastly, all the sources showed insights which were incorporated in a single thematic framework that informs the findings of the study.

The multi-source strategy helps the study overcome the weaknesses of using only a single type of data. To the extent that the end results do not just represent those perceptions of given

individuals, the process will guarantee that the conclusions that are given are backed by common voices and recorded data, which will increase the internal validity as well as the overall reliability of the research.

3.9 Data Analysis

In this research paper, key attention is paid to the fact that social workers are human rights activists who represent and protect vulnerable children. In this regard, the social role ethical obligations of the social worker are complicated that relates to the promotion of social security and human rights of children who are often excluded and vulnerable. The research was thus aimed at establishing the attitude, enabling factors, hindering factors, and responsive approaches through which social workers approach the said issues. The selected participants will be interviewed and focus groups will be conducted using semi-structured interviews and focus group that will be administered personally. The analysis of documents on the policies of the organization, reports on the issue, and case studies among others will be used to complement qualitative data obtained during these interviews (Mayaka, 2021). Such ways will render the study consistent and relevant on the aspect of data collection, a perspective through which adequately relevant knowledge about the challenges and approaches in such an environment could be acquired. The children who are vulnerable are usually under the protection of social workers who are supposed to protect them. They could be stationed in schools, and hospitals and in various community centers and all they do is to serve and provide services to needy children. They have the responsibility of offering education, health care, and safe environment and facilitating what is good to children and their rights (Collins, 2021). The social worker job description entails working with the client in context and setting in which they encounter the client, they are usually challenged much in the attempt to help such children. These impediments may be an insufficiency of resources, complicated processes, and institutionalized discrimination that adds to the isolation of such children by the individual.

The most important principles of the ethical framework described by Hutchison is, as the researcher believed, respect of the inherent dignity and worth of the person, social justice promotion, and integrity. The same situation sometimes applies to social workers who otherwise represent the interest of the child thus leaving them with a hard choice on what needs to be done so as to fulfill the interest of the child and also exercise child rights. This involves attending to the needs of the children adequately and endeavoring to come up with methods

that would improve the overall wellbeing of such vulnerable children (McMellon, 2020). The rights of children also demand that the social workers lobby the policy change concerning social insecurity and human rights violations in the pursuit of ensuring that the world could become a better place in which all children would grow. These individuals are the correct ones to obtain primary data when studying this topic of ethical responsibilities of social workers (Zelnick, 2020). In order to collect the qualitative data on the social workers beliefs and processes, it will be based on the use of semi-structured interviews. Such interviews will include open-ended questions, which will help the social workers to present their opinions and observations in their own words to obtain the best information on the problem and their success in such sphere. This implies that the interview questions and guidelines will be semi-structured such that at the same time there will be a set pattern of interviews, there will be some suing freedom to discuss areas that are specific to the interviewee.

Focus group interviews will be used to complement individual user interviews since interviews will be conducted on a group of social workers. The added benefit of such group discussions is that the group could also generate additional ideas and knowledge about the group experiences and processes of social workers and the similarities and differences in how they address issues (Rees, 2021). The focus groups can also warn the social workers about the changes in practice when emphasizing the experiential-level of change in the efforts to optimize social security and human rights targeting vulnerable children. From that, focus groups will be effective in augmenting the idea of the code of ethics in the profession and the day-to-day experience of the social workers themselves. Policy reports, organizational policy information sheets, and other similar documents with the information about cases will be utilized in addition to interviews and focus group. Such documents may also provide historical data that can help broaden the perspective of social worker on the situation and his/her attitude to the problem (Kobrusieva, 2021). Policy reports can inform the social workers of the general legislations and regulations that guide their operations whereas organizational guidelines can inform the social workers of the specific practices and measures to be adhered to. Certain literature resorts to case descriptions as a way to show the deontological account of how the social workers address particular issues and how ethical standards are applied to practice.

Therefore, by using thematic analysis, the patterns, themes, and other important features of the qualitative data will be calculated. The analysis of data will involve data transcription and categorizing the information as well as interpreting the results in order to address the research questions. In such a manner, the research will identify thematic issues that will continually

assist in developing suitable nets of social security and human rights that facilitate vulnerable children. In this way, the organization of the provided methodological procedure in analyzing outcomes enables obtaining conclusions and recommendations on the base of actual experiences and perceptions of social workers (Rusmaniah, 2021). Courses under this degree program Mr. Conways Boards: Professional Complexity and Ethical Dilemmas and the Ethos of the Profession and the Context of Social Work Practice equip students to the ethical imperative of the social worker and thus make certain that the best interest of the vulnerable children are upheld. Therefore, sharing the difficulties and achievements in this essential area, the current study is devoted to opinions and activities of social workers (Ullah, 2021). The techniques of semi-structured interviews and focus groups and the document analysis will ensure the suitability and completeness of the obtained data.

3.10 Conclusion

To establish the ethical accountabilities of the profession in improving the social security and human rights of the vulnerable children, this study utilized a mixed method design that incorporated self-designed semi-structured interview guides, focus group discussions, and document review. The response of the proposed research questions with the themes as subthemes adapted the frames of interpretation that presented the information on the perceptions of social workers, the potentials, and the vices. Among the four advocacy roles that may be analyzed, the advocacy -structure, money, and system roles have been determined as the most important (Bhatia, 2021). The implications on social work practice, indeed are colossal. This creates a necessity of having social workers abide by the necessary standards of practicing and also participate in advocacy to change the current structures. It also focuses on the detection of the lack of resources and methodical barriers where the organizational assistance is necessary. It implies that social workers must also have the right skills and knowledge that would assist them to advance the protection of children rights and equitable delivery of their rights to receive proper services and proper living environment (Dutta, 2021). The implication in future researches is to expand the sample size of the study and to contact social workers of different backgrounds, who work in various geographical locations and settings. Maybe, longitudinal research might provide a better insight into the transformations that are occurring in the social work practice and the results of such interventions in relation to vulnerable children in the long-term. Moreover, quantitative research may add to the current

qualitative findings, to obtain the full vision of the issues under consideration (Voith, 2020). Thus, the study adds value to the literature known to date concerning the reduction of ethical risks in social work when dealing with vulnerable children. It emphasizes the role of social workers in the dissemination of social security and social rights, suggests and recommends ideas and offers suggestions that can enhance theoretical and practical formulations of social work. The discovery of these ethical standards adds value to the further outlines and decisions of the appropriate interventions and support regimes with the purpose of improving the quality of life of the endangered children.

3.11 Scope Of The Study

Longitudinal research should also be prioritized in future because it would be necessary to follow up children over a long period. Short-term assessments do not always measure the long-term effects of interventions on the mental health, education, social integration, and resilience. Longitudinal research can demonstrate the ways early interventions, family support, and community resources are combined and how they affect their life trajectory of children over time. These kinds of studies also can shed light on the cumulative impact of systemic inequalities, discrimination, and trauma and allow policymakers and practitioners to create interventions that could immediately meet current needs, but contribute to long-term wellbeing.

Studies also need to be broadened in terms of social, cultural, and geographical setups. The local norms, socio-economic status and policy environments are sources of vulnerability to children and are not the same in urban, rural and marginalized communities. Comparative researches will help to identify the problems that are context-specific and show the need to adjust the interventions to a specific environment. As examples, children living in remote locations might experience special barriers in education or healthcare, and culture might vary in the way ethnic or religious groups perceive the safety of children. It is also beneficial that policies being studied be applied by analyzing different contexts to make these policies more generalizable and relevant so that interventions can be fair and culturally competent.

The inclusion of participation perspective and children voices is also very important. Such methods of participatory research as child-led interviews, focus groups, or evaluations enable children to express their experiences and views feeling safe. Learning about the lived experiences of children can help to respond to ethical dilemmas, design services, and work with vulnerable groups. The studies that embrace participation of the children also resonate

with the international approaches like convention on the right of the child (CRC) which highlights the right of children to be heard in issues that are being discussed about them.

It is possible to develop a more refined concept of vulnerability, resilience and intervention efficacy by integrating longitudinal, contextually less homogenous, and participatory research in the future. The approaches assist in designing evidence-based strategies which are not only theoretically sound but also practical and efficient in the future to improve the ability of social workers, policy makers as well as NGOs in safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of children.

3.12 Research Limitations

It is necessary to mention the possible limitations of the research design in the field of enhancing social security and human rights of vulnerable children through major ethical responsibilities of social workers. Indeed, the overall aim of the mentioned kind of research is noble, however, the critical analysis of the findings of the given kind of research reveals that there are certain limitations to it. These limitations can pose a threat to the external validity of the study and the results as well as the possibility of internal validity affecting the results hence the need to take great care in the assessment of results. A major weakness of most studies is the problem of sample selection bias. While choosing the participants for the semi-structured interview and focus groups, the researcher may not be able to capture all the possible diversity within the population of social workers (Pereira, 2020). This may distort the outcomes of the study because characteristics such as geographical location, type of institution, and level of experience may affect selection for the particular study. For example, female social workers originating from cities may experience and have access to different items than their peers working in the countryside (De Jonge, 2020). Every attempt will be made to get a good sample of the population and the numbers required but there will be a certain level of prejudice. This limitation can hinder the generalization of the study's findings to other social workers in society. The second limitation is that the analysis of qualitative data is usually viewed as subjective (Mertens, 2021). Thematic analysis involves a more systematic way of obtaining themes which makes it easier to identify certain patterns that are inherent in the qualitative data that is collected; however, the interpretation of data is always colored by the biases that the researcher has (Krumer-Nevo, 2020). Decisions about the coding and categorization of the material reflect the researcher's interpretation of the information and his or her judgment of what can be considered as a theme and how this theme answers the posed questions. To

overcome this limitation, different researchers can participate in data analysis to increase reliability by comparing the results. However, it must be mentioned that in reality, complete objectiveness is hardly attainable, and thus the results are provided only as one of the possible perceptions of the phenomenon under study.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction To Data Analysis

This chapter presents the analytical approach used to evaluate the improvement of social security and human rights for vulnerable children in relation to the ethical obligations of social workers. The analysis is structured to address the study's objectives, including assessing the current state of social security and human rights for vulnerable children, identifying distinct groups within this population, and examining existing social policies and legal frameworks.

A combination of descriptive, inferential, and qualitative analyses is employed to derive meaningful insights. Descriptive statistics summarize demographic variables and respondents' perspectives on ethical obligations, legal frameworks, and confidence in addressing ethical challenges. Inferential statistical methods, such as chi-square tests and logistic regression, explore associations between professional experience, training, and the ability to navigate ethical dilemmas. Additionally, qualitative thematic analysis provides deeper insights into challenges faced by social workers, barriers to policy implementation, and effective intervention strategies.

Through these analytical techniques, this chapter aims to identify key factors influencing social work practices, highlight policy gaps, and recommend strategies for strengthening social security measures and upholding the rights of vulnerable children.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Population

Table 3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Count	Column N (%)
Gender	Female	138	33.5%
	Male	254	61.7%
	Prefer Not To Say	20	4.9%

Age Group	20-29 years	287	69.7%
	30-39 years	44	10.7%
	40-49 years	49	11.9%
	50-59 years	24	5.8%
	60 years and above	8	1.9%
Highest Level of Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	207	50.2%
	Doctorate (PhD or equivalent)	17	4.1%
	Master's Degree	134	32.5%
	Up to Higher Secondary	54	13.1%
Years of Experience	11-15 years	23	5.6%
	3-5 years	299	72.6%
	6-10 years	34	8.3%
	More than 15 years	56	13.6%
Principal Area of Expertise	Child adoption services	34	8.3%
	Child rights and protection advocacy	93	22.6%
	Child welfare service delivery	86	20.9%
	Family support services	108	26.2%
	Mental health care services for children	91	22.1%
Employment Status	Contract/Temporary	60	14.6%
	Full-time	189	45.9%
	Part-time	102	24.8%

	Per Diem	61	14.8%
Geographical Area of Operation	Multiple regions	45	10.9%
	Rural	68	16.5%
	Suburban	56	13.6%
	Urban	243	59.0%

Summary of Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents highlight key aspects of their background, experience, and professional expertise. The majority of respondents were male (61.7%), while 33.5% were female, and 4.9% preferred not to disclose their gender. The predominant age group was 20-29 years (69.7%), followed by smaller proportions in older age brackets.

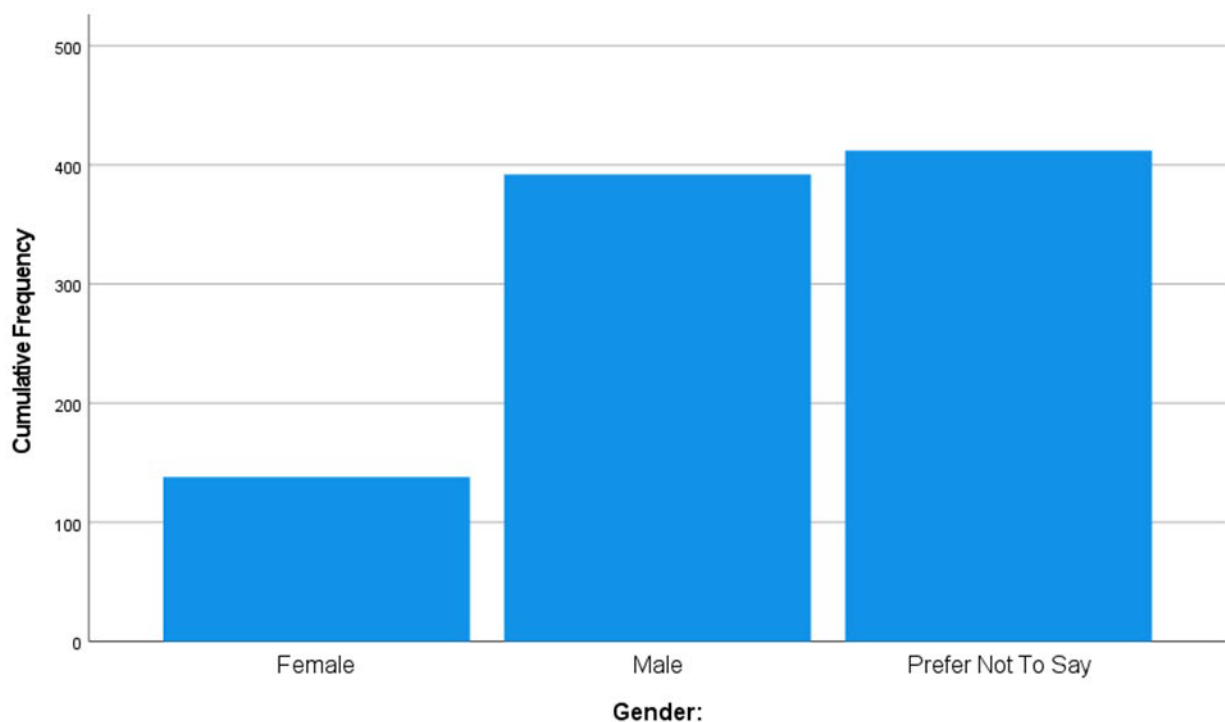


Figure 3: Educational Qualifications

In terms of educational qualifications, half of the respondents (50.2%) held a bachelor's degree, while 32.5% had a master's degree, 13.1% had completed higher secondary education, and only

4.1% held a doctorate. Most respondents had between 3-5 years of experience (72.6%), whereas smaller groups had 6-10 years (8.3%), 11-15 years (5.6%), or more than 15 years (13.6%).

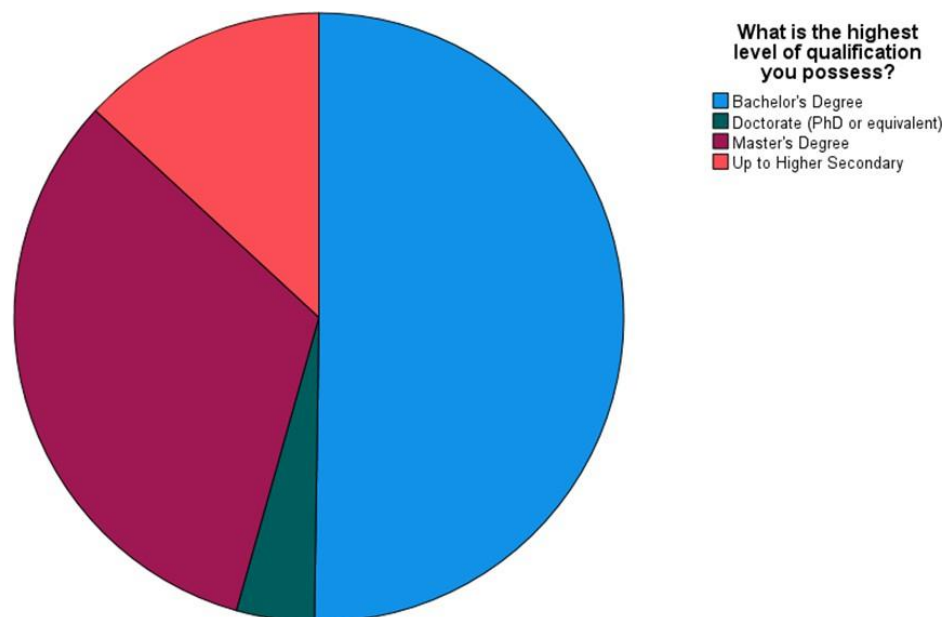


Figure 4: Area of expertise

Regarding areas of expertise, respondents were distributed across various fields, with family support services (26.2%) being the most common, followed by child rights and protection advocacy (22.6%), mental health care services for children (22.1%), child welfare service delivery (20.9%), and child adoption services (8.3%).

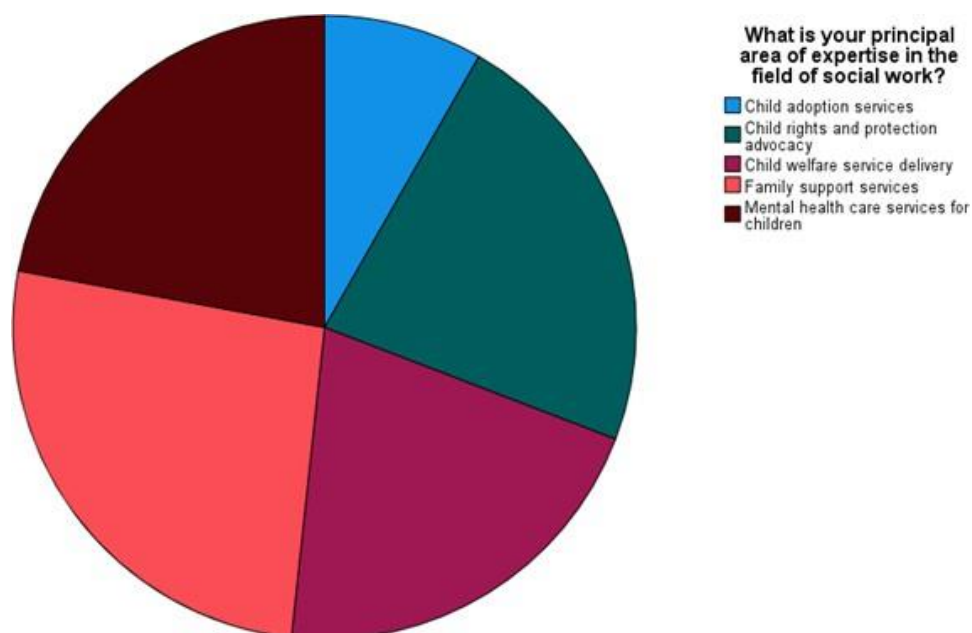


Figure 5: Employment Status

Employment status varied, with 45.9% working full-time, 24.8% in part-time roles, 14.8% in per diem positions, and 14.6% under contract or temporary employment. Geographically, most respondents operated in urban areas (59.0%), while others worked in suburban (13.6%), rural (16.5%), or multiple regions (10.9%).

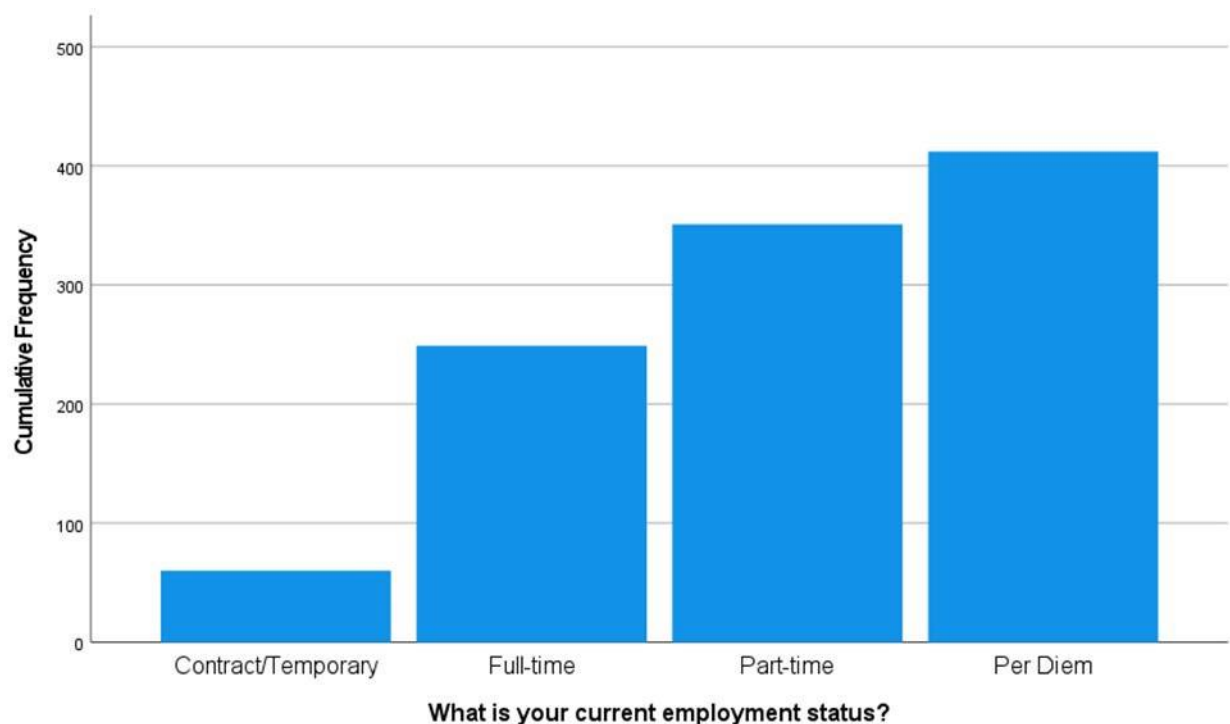


Figure 6: Current employment status

These demographic insights provide an essential foundation for analyzing the ethical obligations of social workers and their role in improving social security and human rights for vulnerable children.

4.3 Improvement of Social Security and Human Rights for Vulnerable Children Concerning Ethical Obligations of Social Workers

The results indicate that social workers face multiple ethical challenges in ensuring social security and human rights for vulnerable children. The understanding of ethical obligations is varied, with a majority expressing a moderate to high level of awareness. However, ethical dilemmas remain a significant concern, particularly regarding professional boundaries and advocacy for children's rights.

Table 4: Understanding of Ethical Obligations

Understanding Level	Count	Percentage (%)
Not at all	17	4.1%
Poorly	18	4.4%
Somewhat	149	36.2%
Well	132	32.0%
Very well	96	23.3%

The findings reveal that social workers face several ethical challenges in promoting the social security and human rights of vulnerable children. While a majority of respondents reported a moderate to high level of understanding of ethical obligations (55.3% rated themselves as "Well" or "Very well"), a significant proportion (40.6%) indicated only a partial or limited understanding.

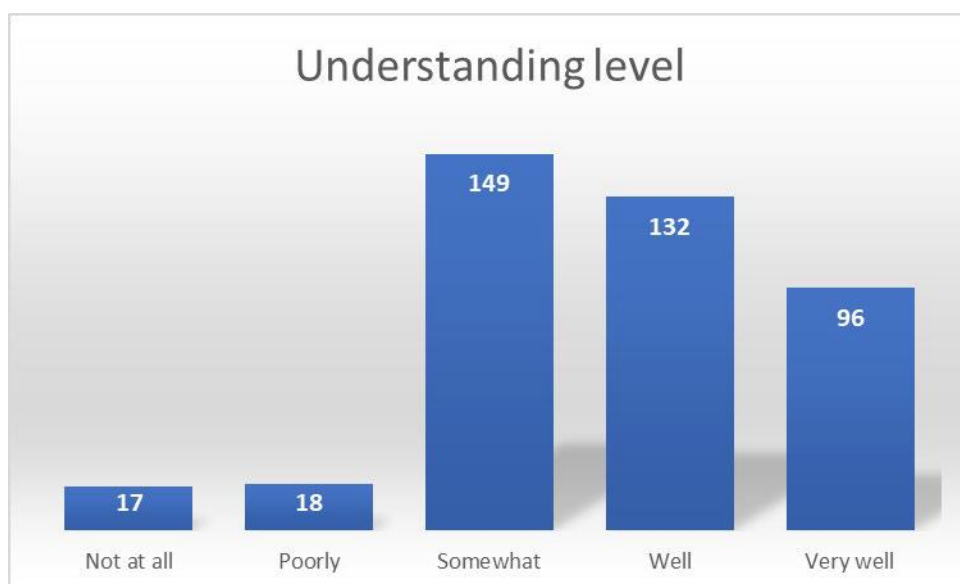


Figure 7: Understanding level

Balancing professional boundaries with empathy (27.9%) and advocating for social justice and children's rights (27.4%) were the most commonly reported ethical challenges. Additionally,

external pressures often create difficulties in maintaining ethical standards, with 40.8% of respondents encountering such challenges "Sometimes" and 15.5% "Very often."

Table 5: Most Difficult Ethical Commitments

Ethical Challenge	Count	Percentage (%)
Advocating for social justice and children's rights	113	27.4%
Balancing professional boundaries with empathy	115	27.9%
Collaborating effectively with other agencies	37	9.0%
Ensuring confidentiality and privacy	100	24.3%
Navigating conflicts of interest	47	11.4%

Collaboration and coordination among social workers and organizations play a crucial role in fulfilling ethical obligations. However, only 27.2% found their collaboration with other agencies to be "Effective," while 42.2% rated it as only "Moderately effective." Open communication (31.8%) and trust and respect among partners (28.9%) were cited as key factors in fostering collaboration. Furthermore, 35.2% of respondents highlighted early help and preventive measures as the most effective strategy for improving social work practice in child protection.

4.4 Current State of Social Security and Human Rights for Vulnerable Children

The inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children remains a concern. Many respondents perceive these services as being only moderately inclusive, while public awareness is considered crucial for strengthening child protection mechanisms.

Table 6: Inclusivity of Social Services

Inclusivity Level	Count	Percentage (%)
Inclusive	62	15.0%
Somewhat inclusive	125	30.3%
Neutral	178	43.2%

Somewhat exclusive	28	6.8%
Very exclusive	19	4.6%

The inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children was rated as "Neutral" by 43.2% of respondents, while only 15.0% believed services were fully inclusive. This suggests potential gaps in accessibility and effectiveness. Confidence in meeting the needs of children from diverse backgrounds was also mixed, with 36.9% of respondents reporting a neutral stance, and only 17.0% expressing a high level of confidence.

Table 7: Importance of Public Awareness

Awareness Level	Count	Percentage (%)
Very crucial	163	39.6%
Crucial	108	26.2%
Neutral	120	29.1%
Slightly crucial	13	3.2%
Not at all crucial	8	1.9%

Public awareness was seen as a crucial factor in strengthening child protection, with 39.6% rating it as "Very crucial" and 26.2% as "Crucial."

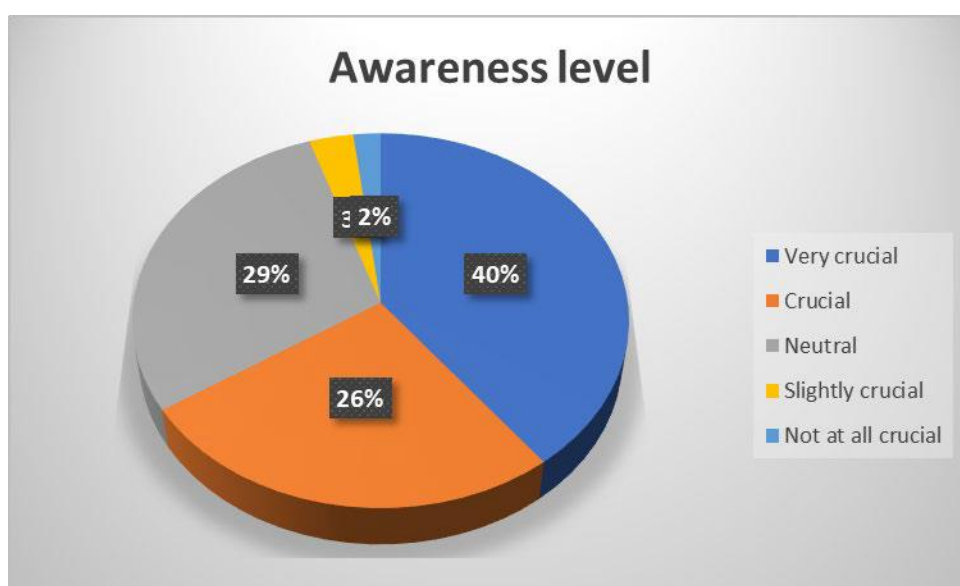


Figure 8: Awareness level

However, participation in public awareness initiatives varied, with only 12.1% engaging "Very frequently" and 20.9% "Frequently," while the majority participated "Occasionally" (34.5%) or "Rarely" (23.5%).

4.5 Identification and Categorization of Vulnerable Children

Although the survey did not directly categorize children into specific vulnerable groups, the findings emphasize the challenges social workers face in advocating for different populations. The ethical obligations that posed the greatest difficulties—advocating for children's rights (27.4%) and balancing professional boundaries with empathy (27.9%)—suggest that children from marginalized backgrounds, including those in poverty, with disabilities, or from displaced communities, may not always receive the necessary support.

Moreover, the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks in supporting ethical commitments was mixed, with only 11.9% rating them as "Very well" supportive. A significant proportion (47.1%) believed that these frameworks only provided "Moderate" support, while 13.3% considered them ineffective or completely unsupportive. This suggests that current policies may not adequately address the diverse needs of different vulnerable child groups.

4.6 Analysis of Social Policies and Legal Frameworks Related to Child Welfare and Social Security

The effectiveness of legal frameworks in guiding ethical decisions and ensuring children's rights is rated as moderate by most respondents. However, gaps in implementation and training persist, indicating the need for policy enhancements.

Table 8: Familiarity with Legal Frameworks

Familiarity Level	Count	Percentage (%)
Very familiar	59	14.3%
Somewhat familiar	96	23.3%
Neutral	141	34.2%
Slightly familiar	56	13.6%
Not familiar at all	60	14.6%

The effectiveness of legal frameworks in guiding ethical decision-making in social work was found to be limited, with only 15.8% of respondents rating them as "Very effective." The majority (43.9%) had a "Neutral" perspective, while 10.0% deemed them ineffective. Similarly, only 14.3% of respondents believed that monitoring and evaluation programs for social work practices were "Very effective," with most respondents (47.3%) considering them only "Moderately effective."

Regarding child welfare training programs, 15.8% of respondents believed they prepared them "Extremely well" for ethical issues, while 38.3% said they were "Moderately well" prepared. Legal knowledge (33.0%) and ethical decision-making frameworks (21.4%) were identified as the most beneficial areas of training for navigating ethical obligations.

Table 9: Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks in Supporting Ethical Commitments

Effectiveness Level	Count	Percentage (%)
Very effective	49	11.9%
Well supportive	114	27.7%
Moderately	194	47.1%
Poorly supportive	38	9.2%
Not at all	17	4.1%

A major challenge in monitoring and evaluating child welfare services was the lack of resources (33.5%), followed by data collection issues (21.1%) and inefficient training (19.2%).

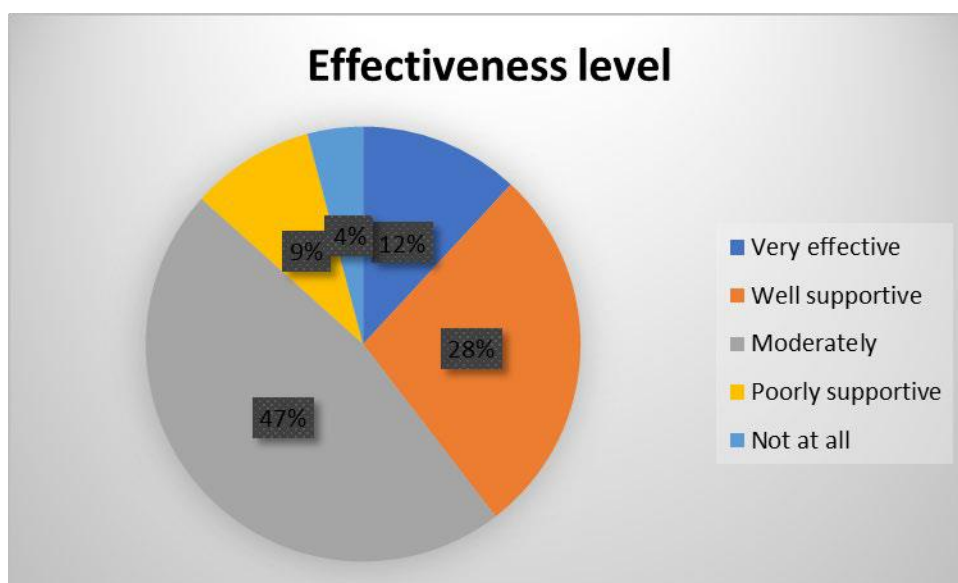


Figure 9: Effectiveness level

Furthermore, the most effective intervention for advancing children's rights was identified as implementing a Child Rights-Based Approach (30.1%), followed by offering counseling services (25.7%) and advocacy at policy levels (17.2%).

4.7 Thematic Analysis

Ethical Challenges and Strategies in Social Work

Introduction

Social work plays a crucial role in advocating for and protecting the rights of vulnerable children. However, professionals in this field face numerous ethical challenges that impact their ability to effectively fulfill their responsibilities. This report explores the ethical obligations of social workers, the difficulties encountered in maintaining ethical standards, and the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks and interventions. Through a thematic and comparative analysis, this study aims to identify key gaps and propose strategies for improving social work practices related to child welfare.

Understanding Ethical Obligations and Challenges

The findings indicate that while a majority of social workers demonstrate a solid understanding of ethical obligations, significant challenges persist. The most commonly cited difficulties include advocating for social justice and children's rights, balancing professional boundaries with empathy, and maintaining confidentiality. Additionally, external pressures from organizations and societal expectations often hinder ethical decision-making, with many professionals reporting frequent struggles in upholding ethical standards.

Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks

Legal frameworks play a critical role in guiding social workers in ethical decision-making. However, the data reveals that while these frameworks are perceived as moderately effective, there are notable gaps in their implementation. Many respondents expressed only a neutral or limited familiarity with the existing laws governing child protection, suggesting a need for more comprehensive legal education and training. Moreover, inconsistencies in policy enforcement and lack of resources further exacerbate these challenges.

Strategies for Addressing Ethical Dilemmas

To navigate ethical dilemmas, social workers rely on a variety of strategies. The analysis shows that ethical decision-making frameworks, conflict resolution skills, and legal knowledge are among the most effective approaches. However, professionals emphasized the need for continuous training and collaboration with other agencies to enhance their ability to address complex ethical issues. Strengthening inter-agency cooperation and ensuring clearly defined roles and responsibilities can significantly improve ethical practices within the field.

The Role of Public Awareness and Inclusivity

Public awareness is recognized as a crucial factor in strengthening the protection of children's rights. Many respondents acknowledged the importance of community engagement in addressing child welfare issues. However, concerns regarding the inclusivity of social services remain prevalent, with reports indicating that children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those living in poverty or with disabilities, often face barriers to receiving adequate support. This suggests a need for targeted interventions to ensure equal access to social security and child protection services.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Work Practices

The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation programs is essential for enhancing social work practices. The data highlights that while current evaluation mechanisms are considered moderately effective, there are significant areas for improvement. Challenges such as inefficient training, data collection issues, and resource constraints hinder the success of these programs. Addressing these barriers through systematic reforms and investments in evaluation methodologies can lead to more informed decision-making and improved child welfare outcomes.

This study underscores the ethical challenges faced by social workers and the importance of effective legal frameworks, training programs, and inter-agency collaboration. While professionals demonstrate a strong understanding of ethical obligations, external pressures, policy gaps, and resource limitations continue to pose obstacles. Strengthening legal frameworks, increasing public awareness, and enhancing monitoring mechanisms are critical steps toward improving social security and human rights for vulnerable children. Future research should focus on identifying and addressing systemic barriers to ethical social work practices to ensure sustainable improvements in child welfare services.

4.8 Effect Of Demographic Characteristics

		Gender:					
		Female		Male		Prefer Not To Say	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Not at all	3	2.2%	9	3.5%	5	25.0%
	Poorly	2	1.4%	15	5.9%	1	5.0%
	Somewhat	52	37.7%	91	35.8%	6	30.0%
	Very well	33	23.9%	59	23.2%	4	20.0%
	Well	48	34.8%	80	31.5%	4	20.0%
Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children?	Advocating for social justice and children's rights	41	29.7%	68	26.8%	4	20.0%
	Balancing professional boundaries with empathy	37	26.8%	73	28.7%	5	25.0%
	Collaborating effectively with other agencies	9	6.5%	24	9.4%	4	20.0%

	Ensuring confidentiality and privacy	34	24.6%	62	24.4%	4	20.0%
	Navigating conflicts of interest	17	12.3%	27	10.6%	3	15.0%
How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizational, societal)?	Never	4	2.9%	13	5.1%	4	20.0%
	Often	31	22.5%	60	23.6%	3	15.0%
	Rarely	15	10.9%	50	19.7%	0	0.0%
	Sometimes	74	53.6%	86	33.9%	8	40.0%
	Very often	14	10.1%	45	17.7%	5	25.0%
What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Neutral	46	33.3%	90	35.4%	5	25.0%
	Not familiar at all	21	15.2%	33	13.0%	6	30.0%
	Slightly familiar	26	18.8%	28	11.0%	2	10.0%
	Somewhat familiar	31	22.5%	59	23.2%	6	30.0%
	Very familiar	14	10.1%	44	17.3%	1	5.0%
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to	Moderately	74	53.6%	112	44.1%	8	40.0%
	Not at all	4	2.9%	10	3.9%	3	15.0%
	Poorly	10	7.2%	26	10.2%	2	10.0%
	Very well	11	8.0%	36	14.2%	2	10.0%
	Well	39	28.3%	70	27.6%	5	25.0%

vulnerable children?							
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Effective	39	28.3%	73	28.7%	3	15.0%
	Ineffective	18	13.0%	21	8.3%	2	10.0%
	Neutral	66	47.8%	106	41.7%	9	45.0%
	Very effective	15	10.9%	46	18.1%	4	20.0%
	Very ineffective	0	0.0%	8	3.1%	2	10.0%
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Extremely well	16	11.6%	47	18.5%	2	10.0%
	Moderately well	49	35.5%	99	39.0%	10	50.0%
	Not at all	5	3.6%	9	3.5%	1	5.0%
	Poorly	12	8.7%	13	5.1%	0	0.0%
	Well	56	40.6%	86	33.9%	7	35.0%
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating ethical obligations?	Advocacy skills	12	8.7%	27	10.6%	2	10.0%
	Conflict resolution	19	13.8%	48	18.9%	2	10.0%
	Cultural competence	20	14.5%	52	20.5%	6	30.0%
	Ethical decision-making frameworks	43	31.2%	42	16.5%	3	15.0%
	Legal knowledge	44	31.9%	85	33.5%	7	35.0%
	Inclusive	18	13.0%	42	16.5%	2	10.0%

What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Neutral	62	44.9%	109	42.9%	7	35.0%
	Somewhat exclusive	7	5.1%	18	7.1%	3	15.0%
	Somewhat inclusive	44	31.9%	75	29.5%	6	30.0%
	Very exclusive	7	5.1%	10	3.9%	2	10.0%
What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social work practice?	Confident	50	36.2%	82	32.3%	2	10.0%
	Neutral	52	37.7%	89	35.0%	11	55.0%
	Not confident at all	4	2.9%	9	3.5%	3	15.0%
	Slightly confident	15	10.9%	25	9.8%	0	0.0%
	Very confident	17	12.3%	49	19.3%	4	20.0%
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Crucial	35	25.4%	68	26.8%	5	25.0%
	Neutral	42	30.4%	71	28.0%	7	35.0%
	Not at all crucial	1	0.7%	6	2.4%	1	5.0%
	Slightly crucial	3	2.2%	8	3.1%	2	10.0%
	Very crucial	57	41.3%	101	39.8%	5	25.0%
How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on	Frequently	28	20.3%	55	21.7%	3	15.0%
	Never	14	10.1%	19	7.5%	4	20.0%
	Occasionally	52	37.7%	85	33.5%	5	25.0%
	Rarely	36	26.1%	57	22.4%	4	20.0%
	Very frequently	8	5.8%	38	15.0%	4	20.0%

the rights of vulnerable children?							
What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Frequently	26	18.8%	53	20.9%	2	10.0%
	Never	13	9.4%	25	9.8%	7	35.0%
	Occasionally	61	44.2%	93	36.6%	6	30.0%
	Rarely	29	21.0%	47	18.5%	3	15.0%
	Very frequently	9	6.5%	36	14.2%	2	10.0%
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children?	Effective	40	29.0%	68	26.8%	4	20.0%
	Ineffective	16	11.6%	23	9.1%	5	25.0%
	Moderately effective	61	44.2%	107	42.1%	6	30.0%
	Very effective	15	10.9%	46	18.1%	3	15.0%
	Very ineffective	6	4.3%	10	3.9%	2	10.0%
What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice?	Defined roles and responsibilities	21	15.2%	30	11.8%	4	20.0%
	Open communication	43	31.2%	81	31.9%	7	35.0%
	Shared vision and goals	29	21.0%	53	20.9%	1	5.0%

	Trust and respect among partners	36	26.1%	76	29.9%	7	35.0%
	Variety of resources and expertise	9	6.5%	14	5.5%	1	5.0%
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?		0	0.0%	5	2.0%	2	10.0%
	Never	10	7.2%	23	9.1%	2	10.0%
	Occasionally	58	42.0%	91	35.8%	7	35.0%
	Often	28	20.3%	53	20.9%	2	10.0%
	Rarely	30	21.7%	46	18.1%	4	20.0%
	Very often	12	8.7%	36	14.2%	3	15.0%
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Effective	35	25.4%	64	25.2%	6	30.0%
	Ineffective	12	8.7%	29	11.4%	3	15.0%
	Moderately effective	77	55.8%	111	43.7%	7	35.0%
	Very effective	13	9.4%	44	17.3%	2	10.0%
	Very ineffective	1	0.7%	6	2.4%	2	10.0%
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child welfare services?	Applying insights to practice and policy	20	14.5%	25	9.8%	5	25.0%
	Data collection issues	24	17.4%	56	22.0%	7	35.0%

	Inefficient training	33	23.9%	45	17.7%	1	5.0%
	Lack of resources	42	30.4%	91	35.8%	5	25.0%
	Resistance to change	19	13.8%	37	14.6%	2	10.0%
In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Actively involving communities	31	22.5%	72	28.3%	4	20.0%
	Collaborating with professionals	15	10.9%	19	7.5%	1	5.0%
	Coordinated network of services	24	17.4%	52	20.5%	5	25.0%
	Early help and preventive measures	53	38.4%	87	34.3%	5	25.0%
	Investing in the training and development	15	10.9%	24	9.4%	5	25.0%
In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children?	Advocacy at policy levels	19	13.8%	50	19.7%	2	10.0%
	Conducting workshops for parents only	18	13.0%	29	11.4%	2	10.0%
	Implementing Child Rights-	56	40.6%	61	24.0%	7	35.0%

	Based Approach (CRBA)						
	Offering counselling services only	34	24.6%	67	26.4%	5	25.0%
	Solely providing financial support	11	8.0%	47	18.5%	4	20.0%

Pearson Chi-Square Tests		
		Gender:
How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Chi-square	28.361
	Df	8
	Sig.	.000 ^{*,b,c}
Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children?	Chi-square	5.204
	Df	8
	Sig.	.736 ^b
How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external	Chi-square	31.442
	Df	8
	Sig.	.000 ^{*,b}

pressures (e.g., organizational, societal)?		
What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Chi-square	13.520
	Df	8
	Sig.	.095 ^b
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to vulnerable children?	Chi-square	12.112
	Df	8
	Sig.	.146 ^{b,c}
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Chi-square	15.904
	Df	8
	Sig.	.044 ^{*,b,c}
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Chi-square	8.570
	Df	8
	Sig.	.380 ^{b,c}
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating ethical obligations?	Chi-square	14.805
	Df	8
	Sig.	.063 ^b
What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Chi-square	5.845
	Df	8
	Sig.	.665 ^{b,c}
	Chi-square	17.338

What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social work practice?	Df	8
	Sig.	.027 ^{*,b,c}
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Chi-square	7.336
	Df	8
	Sig.	.501 ^{b,c}
How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	12.859
	Df	8
	Sig.	.117 ^b
What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Chi-square	19.215
	Df	8
	Sig.	.014 ^{*,b}
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	10.555
	Df	8
	Sig.	.228 ^{b,c}
What is the most effective factor for	Chi-square	4.860
	Df	8

fostering collaboration in your practice?	Sig.	.772 ^b
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?	Chi-square	15.902
	Df	10
	Sig.	.102 ^{b,c}
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Chi-square	15.745
	Df	8
	Sig.	.046 ^{*,b,c}
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child welfare services?	Chi-square	12.807
	Df	8
	Sig.	.119 ^b
In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Chi-square	8.993
	Df	8
	Sig.	.343 ^b
In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children?	Chi-square	18.080
	Df	8
	Sig.	.021 ^{*,b}
Results are based on nonempty rows and columns in each innermost subtable.		

*. The Chi-square statistic is significant at the .05 level.
b. More than 20% of cells in this subtable have expected cell counts less than 5. Chi-square results may be invalid.
c. The minimum expected cell count in this subtable is less than one. Chi-square results may be invalid.

Summary of Results

The study examined the effect of gender on various ethical, legal, and professional challenges in working with vulnerable children. Responses were analyzed across three gender categories: Female, Male, and Prefer Not to Say. Chi-square tests were conducted to determine the statistical significance of gender differences.

4.9 Significant Findings

Gender had a statistically significant effect on the following aspects:

1. Understanding Ethical Obligations ($\chi^2(8) = 28.361$, $p = .000$) – Gender significantly influenced how well participants understood the ethical obligations related to promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights.
2. Challenges in Maintaining Ethical Standards ($\chi^2(8) = 31.442$, $p = .000$) – Gender affected how frequently respondents encountered external pressures that challenged their ethical standards.
3. Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks in Resolving Ethical Dilemmas ($\chi^2(8) = 15.904$, $p = .044$) – Gender was associated with differing perceptions of how effective legal frameworks are in providing guidance for resolving ethical dilemmas.
4. Confidence in Meeting the Needs of Children from Diverse Backgrounds ($\chi^2(8) = 17.338$, $p = .027$) – Participants' confidence levels in addressing the needs of children varied significantly by gender.

5. Frequency of Coordination with Other Social Workers/Organizations ($\chi^2(8) = 19.215$, $p = .014$) – Gender influenced how often individuals coordinated with colleagues and organizations to fulfill their ethical obligations.
6. Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Programs ($\chi^2(8) = 15.745$, $p = .046$) – Perceptions of how well monitoring and evaluation programs enhance social work practices varied significantly by gender.
7. Most Effective Interventions for Advancing Children's Rights ($\chi^2(8) = 18.080$, $p = .021$) – Gender was a significant factor in determining which intervention strategies participants viewed as most effective in advancing children's rights.

4.10 Non-Significant Findings

Several areas did not show statistically significant differences by gender, including difficulties in fulfilling ethical obligations, familiarity with legal frameworks, perceptions of social service inclusivity, participation in public awareness initiatives, and factors fostering collaboration.

Overall, the findings suggest that gender plays a role in perceptions and experiences related to ethical and legal challenges in social work with vulnerable children. These results highlight the need for gender-sensitive approaches in training, policy-making, and support structures within the field.

Table 10 Effect of Age

		Which age group do you belong to?									
		20-29 years		30-39 years		40-49 years		50-59 years		60 years and above	
		Count	Column %	Count	Column %	Count	Column %	Count	Column %	Count	Column %
How well do you understand	Not at all	10	3.5%	1	2.3%	4	8.2%	0	0.0%	2	25.0%
	Poorly	12	4.2%	4	9.1%	1	2.0%	1	4.2%	0	0.0%

d the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Somewhat	102	35.5 %	15	34.1 %	18	36.7 %	12	50.0 %	2	25.0 %
	Very well	67	23.3 %	11	25.0 %	12	24.5 %	4	16.7 %	2	25.0 %
	Well	96	33.4 %	13	29.5 %	14	28.6 %	7	29.2 %	2	25.0 %
Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable	Advocating for social justice and children's rights	84	29.3 %	9	20.5 %	14	28.6 %	5	20.8 %	1	12.5 %
	Balancing professional boundaries with empathy	78	27.2 %	13	29.5 %	14	28.6 %	9	37.5 %	1	12.5 %
	Collaborating effectively with	23	8.0%	4	9.1%	4	8.2%	3	12.5 %	3	37.5 %

e children?	other agencies										
	Ensuring confidenti ality and privacy	69	24.0 %	15	34.1 %	10	20.4 %	5	20.8 %	1	12.5 %
	Navigatin g conflicts of interest	33	11.5 %	3	6.8%	7	14.3 %	2	8.3%	2	25.0 %
How often do you face challenge s in maintaini ng ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizat ional, societal)?	Never	12	4.2%	2	4.5%	3	6.1%	1	4.2%	3	37.5 %
	Often	67	23.3 %	11	25.0 %	10	20.4 %	5	20.8 %	1	12.5 %
	Rarely	43	15.0 %	4	9.1%	11	22.4 %	6	25.0 %	1	12.5 %
	Sometime s	116	40.4 %	18	40.9 %	22	44.9 %	9	37.5 %	3	37.5 %
	Very often	49	17.1 %	9	20.5 %	3	6.1%	3	12.5 %	0	0.0%
What is your level of familiarit y with the	Neutral	107	37.3 %	13	29.5 %	14	28.6 %	5	20.8 %	2	25.0 %
	Not familiar at all	30	10.5 %	8	18.2 %	16	32.7 %	4	16.7 %	2	25.0 %

current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Slightly familiar	31	10.8 %	8	18.2 %	8	16.3 %	7	29.2 %	2	25.0 %
	Somewhat familiar	70	24.4 %	9	20.5 %	7	14.3 %	8	33.3 %	2	25.0 %
	Very familiar	49	17.1 %	6	13.6 %	4	8.2 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to vulnerable children?	Moderately	129	44.9 %	27	61.4 %	21	42.9 %	13	54.2 %	4	50.0 %
	Not at all	8	2.8 %	0	0.0 %	5	10.2 %	1	4.2 %	3	37.5 %
	Poorly	23	8.0 %	4	9.1 %	5	10.2 %	5	20.8 %	1	12.5 %
	Very well	42	14.6 %	5	11.4 %	2	4.1 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
	Well	85	29.6 %	8	18.2 %	16	32.7 %	5	20.8 %	0	0.0 %
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how effective are the	Effective	80	27.9 %	13	29.5 %	14	28.6 %	7	29.2 %	1	12.5 %
	Ineffective	22	7.7 %	6	13.6 %	9	18.4 %	4	16.7 %	0	0.0 %
	Neutral	125	43.6 %	17	38.6 %	25	51.0 %	10	41.7 %	4	50.0 %
	Very effective	53	18.5 %	7	15.9 %	1	2.0 %	3	12.5 %	1	12.5 %

legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Very ineffective	7	2.4%	1	2.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	25.0%
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Extremely well	50	17.4%	7	15.9%	4	8.2%	4	16.7%	0	0.0%
	Moderately well	110	38.3%	18	40.9%	18	36.7%	9	37.5%	3	37.5%
	Not at all	8	2.8%	0	0.0%	5	10.2%	1	4.2%	1	12.5%
	Poorly	15	5.2%	1	2.3%	4	8.2%	4	16.7%	1	12.5%
	Well	104	36.2%	18	40.9%	18	36.7%	6	25.0%	3	37.5%
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating ethical obligations?	Advocacy skills	24	8.4%	7	15.9%	3	6.1%	6	25.0%	1	12.5%
	Conflict resolution	48	16.7%	10	22.7%	8	16.3%	2	8.3%	1	12.5%
	Cultural competence	57	19.9%	6	13.6%	12	24.5%	2	8.3%	1	12.5%
	Ethical decision-making frameworks	52	18.1%	10	22.7%	12	24.5%	10	41.7%	4	50.0%

	Legal knowledge	106	36.9 %	11	25.0 %	14	28.6 %	4	16.7 %	1	12.5 %
What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Inclusive	44	15.3 %	6	13.6 %	7	14.3 %	4	16.7 %	1	12.5 %
	Neutral	123	42.9 %	18	40.9 %	22	44.9 %	11	45.8 %	4	50.0 %
	Somewhat exclusive	18	6.3%	5	11.4 %	5	10.2 %	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Somewhat inclusive	91	31.7 %	14	31.8 %	10	20.4 %	8	33.3 %	2	25.0 %
	Very exclusive	11	3.8%	1	2.3%	5	10.2 %	1	4.2%	1	12.5 %
What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social	Confident	92	32.1 %	20	45.5 %	15	30.6 %	5	20.8 %	2	25.0 %
	Neutral	109	38.0 %	10	22.7 %	21	42.9 %	9	37.5 %	3	37.5 %
	Not confident at all	11	3.8%	0	0.0%	2	4.1%	2	8.3%	1	12.5 %
	Slightly confident	24	8.4%	6	13.6 %	5	10.2 %	4	16.7 %	1	12.5 %
	Very confident	51	17.8 %	8	18.2 %	6	12.2 %	4	16.7 %	1	12.5 %

work practice?											
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Crucial	75	26.1 %	12	27.3 %	10	20.4 %	9	37.5 %	2	25.0 %
	Neutral	93	32.4 %	12	27.3 %	12	24.5 %	1	4.2%	2	25.0 %
	Not at all crucial	5	1.7%	1	2.3%	1	2.0%	1	4.2%	0	0.0%
	Slightly crucial	6	2.1%	2	4.5%	3	6.1%	0	0.0%	2	25.0 %
	Very crucial	108	37.6 %	17	38.6 %	23	46.9 %	13	54.2 %	2	25.0 %
How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children?	Frequently	63	22.0 %	10	22.7 %	8	16.3 %	4	16.7 %	1	12.5 %
	Never	23	8.0%	2	4.5%	9	18.4 %	2	8.3%	1	12.5 %
	Occasionally	102	35.5 %	14	31.8 %	16	32.7 %	7	29.2 %	3	37.5 %
	Rarely	61	21.3 %	12	27.3 %	12	24.5 %	10	41.7 %	2	25.0 %
	Very frequently	38	13.2 %	6	13.6 %	4	8.2%	1	4.2%	1	12.5 %

What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Frequently	62	21.6 %	9	20.5 %	7	14.3 %	1	4.2%	2	25.0 %
	Never	28	9.8%	3	6.8%	10	20.4 %	4	16.7 %	0	0.0%
	Occasionally	117	40.8 %	14	31.8 %	18	36.7 %	8	33.3 %	3	37.5 %
	Rarely	44	15.3 %	10	22.7 %	13	26.5 %	9	37.5 %	3	37.5 %
	Very frequently	36	12.5 %	8	18.2 %	1	2.0%	2	8.3%	0	0.0%
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable	Effective	87	30.3 %	11	25.0 %	11	22.4 %	2	8.3%	1	12.5 %
	Ineffective	23	8.0%	6	13.6 %	6	12.2 %	7	29.2 %	2	25.0 %
	Moderately effective	119	41.5 %	17	38.6 %	23	46.9 %	11	45.8 %	4	50.0 %
	Very effective	49	17.1 %	9	20.5 %	3	6.1%	3	12.5 %	0	0.0%
	Very ineffective	9	3.1%	1	2.3%	6	12.2 %	1	4.2%	1	12.5 %

e children?											
What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice?	Defined roles and responsibilities	33	11.5 %	9	20.5 %	8	16.3 %	2	8.3%	3	37.5 %
	Open communication	104	36.2 %	8	18.2 %	10	20.4 %	6	25.0 %	3	37.5 %
	Shared vision and goals	54	18.8 %	10	22.7 %	13	26.5 %	6	25.0 %	0	0.0%
	Trust and respect among partners	79	27.5 %	15	34.1 %	15	30.6 %	8	33.3 %	2	25.0 %
	Variety of resources and expertise	17	5.9%	2	4.5%	3	6.1%	2	8.3%	0	0.0%
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring		6	2.1%	1	2.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Never	21	7.3%	2	4.5%	9	18.4 %	2	8.3%	1	12.5 %
	Occasionally	104	36.2 %	17	38.6 %	25	51.0 %	8	33.3 %	2	25.0 %
	Often	64	22.3 %	11	25.0 %	3	6.1%	3	12.5 %	2	25.0 %
	Rarely	52	18.1 %	7	15.9 %	8	16.3 %	10	41.7 %	3	37.5 %

initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?	Very often	40	13.9 %	6	13.6 %	4	8.2%	1	4.2%	0	0.0%
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Effective	73	25.4 %	14	31.8 %	8	16.3 %	7	29.2 %	3	37.5 %
	Ineffective	27	9.4%	5	11.4 %	5	10.2 %	6	25.0 %	1	12.5 %
	Moderately effective	132	46.0 %	21	47.7 %	31	63.3 %	8	33.3 %	3	37.5 %
	Very effective	49	17.1 %	4	9.1%	4	8.2%	2	8.3%	0	0.0%
	Very ineffective	6	2.1%	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	1	4.2%	1	12.5 %
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child	Applying insights to practice and policy	37	12.9 %	1	2.3%	7	14.3 %	5	20.8 %	0	0.0%
	Data collection issues	64	22.3 %	7	15.9 %	10	20.4 %	2	8.3%	4	50.0 %

welfare services?	Inefficient training	51	17.8 %	12	27.3 %	9	18.4 %	5	20.8 %	2	25.0 %
	Lack of resources	102	35.5 %	14	31.8 %	15	30.6 %	6	25.0 %	1	12.5 %
	Resistance to change	33	11.5 %	10	22.7 %	8	16.3 %	6	25.0 %	1	12.5 %
In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Actively involving communities	80	27.9 %	7	15.9 %	15	30.6 %	5	20.8 %	0	0.0%
	Collaborating with professionals	24	8.4%	3	6.8%	5	10.2 %	3	12.5 %	0	0.0%
	Coordinated network of services	69	24.0 %	5	11.4 %	5	10.2 %	2	8.3%	0	0.0%
	Early help and preventive measures	88	30.7 %	22	50.0 %	19	38.8 %	11	45.8 %	5	62.5 %
	Investing in the training and	26	9.1%	7	15.9 %	5	10.2 %	3	12.5 %	3	37.5 %

	development										
In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children?	Advocacy at policy levels	56	19.5 %	4	9.1 %	7	14.3 %	4	16.7 %	0	0.0 %
	Conducting workshops for parents only	33	11.5 %	6	13.6 %	3	6.1 %	5	20.8 %	2	25.0 %
	Implementing Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA)	80	27.9 %	17	38.6 %	15	30.6 %	9	37.5 %	3	37.5 %
	Offering counselling services only	71	24.7 %	12	27.3 %	15	30.6 %	5	20.8 %	3	37.5 %
	Solely providing financial support	47	16.4 %	5	11.4 %	9	18.4 %	1	4.2 %	0	0.0 %

Table 11 Pearson Chi-square Test

	Which age group do you belong to?	
How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Chi-square	18.069
	Df	16
	Sig.	.320 ^{a,b}
Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children?	Chi-square	16.971
	Df	16
	Sig.	.387 ^{a,b}
How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizational, societal)?	Chi-square	27.479
	Df	16
	Sig.	.036 ^{a,b,*}
What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Chi-square	36.499
	Df	16
	Sig.	.002 ^{a,*}
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to vulnerable children?	Chi-square	48.818
	Df	16
	Sig.	.000 ^{a,b,*}
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work,	Chi-square	35.134
	Df	16

how effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Sig.	.004 ^{a,b,*}
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Chi-square	21.230
	Df	16
	Sig.	.170 ^{a,b}
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating ethical obligations?	Chi-square	28.588
	Df	16
	Sig.	.027 ^{a,b,*}
What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Chi-square	12.126
	Df	16
	Sig.	.735 ^{a,b}
What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social work practice?	Chi-square	14.307
	Df	16
	Sig.	.576 ^{a,b}
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Chi-square	27.527
	Df	16
	Sig.	.036 ^{a,b,*}
How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	14.367
	Df	16
	Sig.	.571 ^{a,b}
	Chi-square	28.545

What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Df	16
	Sig.	.027 ^{a,b,*}
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	32.420
	Df	16
	Sig.	.009 ^{a,b,*}
What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice?	Chi-square	18.443
	Df	16
	Sig.	.299 ^{a,b}
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?	Chi-square	30.302
	Df	20
	Sig.	.065 ^{a,b}
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Chi-square	22.588
	Df	16
	Sig.	.125 ^{a,b}
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child welfare services?	Chi-square	22.099
	Df	16
	Sig.	.140 ^{a,b}
	Chi-square	30.374

In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Df	16
	Sig.	.016 ^{a,b,*}
In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children?	Chi-square	16.045
	Df	16
	Sig.	.450 ^{a,b}

Results are based on nonempty rows and columns in each innermost subtable.

*. The Chi-square statistic is significant at the .05 level.

a. More than 20% of cells in this subtable have expected cell counts less than 5. Chi-square results may be invalid.

b. The minimum expected cell count in this subtable is less than one. Chi-square results may be invalid.

The chi-square test results reveal significant differences in several key areas related to ethical and legal considerations in social work with vulnerable children. Statistically significant results ($p < 0.05$) indicate that age groups differ in how frequently they face ethical challenges due to external pressures ($\chi^2 = 27.479$, $p = 0.036$), their familiarity with legal frameworks governing child protection ($\chi^2 = 36.499$, $p = 0.002$), and the effectiveness of legal frameworks in guiding ethical decisions ($\chi^2 = 35.134$, $p = 0.004$). Additionally, significant variations exist in how well legal frameworks support ethical commitments ($\chi^2 = 48.818$, $p < 0.001$), training program advantages for ethical navigation ($\chi^2 = 28.588$, $p = 0.027$), and coordination efforts with other professionals to uphold ethical obligations ($\chi^2 = 28.545$, $p = 0.027$).

These findings suggest that younger professionals may be more familiar with current legal standards, possibly due to recent training, whereas older professionals might struggle with outdated legal knowledge. Ethical dilemmas influenced by organizational or societal pressures appear to impact some age groups more than others, potentially reflecting differences in professional roles or experience levels. The results emphasize the need for targeted legal and

ethical training across age groups to ensure consistency in social work practice. However, some chi-square results may be invalid due to low expected cell counts, indicating a need for further validation with larger sample sizes or alternative statistical methods.

Table 12 Effect of education

		What is the highest level of qualification you possess?							
		Bachelor's Degree		Doctorate (PhD or equivalent)		Master's Degree		Up to Higher Secondary	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Not at all	7	3.4%	3	17.6%	4	3.0%	3	5.6%
	Poorly	7	3.4%	1	5.9%	5	3.7%	5	9.3%
	Somewhat	83	40.1%	5	29.4%	45	33.6%	16	29.6%
	Very well	42	20.3%	6	35.3%	34	25.4%	14	25.9%
	Well	68	32.9%	2	11.8%	46	34.3%	16	29.6%
Which of the following is	Advocating for social justice and	58	28.0%	6	35.3%	34	25.4%	15	27.8%

the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children?	children's rights								
	Balancing professional boundaries with empathy	68	32.9%	2	11.8%	39	29.1%	6	11.1%
	Collaborating effectively with other agencies	15	7.2%	2	11.8%	12	9.0%	8	14.8%
	Ensuring confidentiality and privacy	46	22.2%	4	23.5%	33	24.6%	17	31.5%
	Navigating conflicts of interest	20	9.7%	3	17.6%	16	11.9%	8	14.8%
How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizational)	Never	5	2.4%	2	11.8%	8	6.0%	6	11.1%
	Often	52	25.1%	2	11.8%	30	22.4%	10	18.5%
	Rarely	34	16.4%	2	11.8%	22	16.4%	7	13.0%
	Sometimes	91	44.0%	7	41.2%	56	41.8%	14	25.9%
	Very often	25	12.1%	4	23.5%	18	13.4%	17	31.5%

nal, societal)?									
What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Neutral	72	34.8%	7	41.2%	46	34.3%	16	29.6%
	Not familiar at all	28	13.5%	4	23.5%	19	14.2%	9	16.7%
	Slightly familiar	30	14.5%	1	5.9%	20	14.9%	5	9.3%
	Somewhat familiar	54	26.1%	0	0.0%	32	23.9%	10	18.5%
	Very familiar	23	11.1%	5	29.4%	17	12.7%	14	25.9%
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitmen ts to vulnerable children?	Moderately	105	50.7%	5	29.4%	63	47.0%	21	38.9%
	Not at all	4	1.9%	2	11.8%	3	2.2%	8	14.8%
	Poorly	20	9.7%	5	29.4%	10	7.5%	3	5.6%
	Very well	22	10.6%	4	23.5%	13	9.7%	10	18.5%
	Well	56	27.1%	1	5.9%	45	33.6%	12	22.2%
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how	Effective	56	27.1%	4	23.5%	44	32.8%	11	20.4%
	Ineffective	22	10.6%	3	17.6%	12	9.0%	4	7.4%
	Neutral	101	48.8%	4	23.5%	59	44.0%	17	31.5%
	Very effective	27	13.0%	5	29.4%	17	12.7%	16	29.6%

effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Very ineffective	1	0.5%	1	5.9%	2	1.5%	6	11.1%
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Extremely well	26	12.6%	6	35.3%	23	17.2%	10	18.5%
	Moderately well	96	46.4%	3	17.6%	43	32.1%	16	29.6%
	Not at all	8	3.9%	1	5.9%	3	2.2%	3	5.6%
	Poorly	12	5.8%	1	5.9%	8	6.0%	4	7.4%
	Well	65	31.4%	6	35.3%	57	42.5%	21	38.9%
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageo us for navigating ethical obligations ?	Advocacy skills	19	9.2%	2	11.8%	15	11.2%	5	9.3%
	Conflict resolution	41	19.8%	2	11.8%	18	13.4%	8	14.8%
	Cultural competence	43	20.8%	1	5.9%	23	17.2%	11	20.4%
	Ethical decision- making frameworks	33	15.9%	5	29.4%	41	30.6%	9	16.7%
	Legal knowledge	71	34.3%	7	41.2%	37	27.6%	21	38.9%
What is the level of	Inclusive	28	13.5%	2	11.8%	16	11.9%	16	29.6%
	Neutral	97	46.9%	9	52.9%	56	41.8%	16	29.6%

inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Somewhat exclusive	12	5.8%	1	5.9%	10	7.5%	5	9.3%
	Somewhat inclusive	64	30.9%	3	17.6%	46	34.3%	12	22.2%
	Very exclusive	6	2.9%	2	11.8%	6	4.5%	5	9.3%
What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social work practice?	Confident	66	31.9%	4	23.5%	54	40.3%	10	18.5%
	Neutral	85	41.1%	6	35.3%	43	32.1%	18	33.3%
	Not confident at all	7	3.4%	1	5.9%	4	3.0%	4	7.4%
	Slightly confident	21	10.1%	4	23.5%	10	7.5%	5	9.3%
	Very confident	28	13.5%	2	11.8%	23	17.2%	17	31.5%
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Crucial	55	26.6%	6	35.3%	32	23.9%	15	27.8%
	Neutral	66	31.9%	2	11.8%	42	31.3%	10	18.5%
	Not at all crucial	2	1.0%	1	5.9%	2	1.5%	3	5.6%
	Slightly crucial	3	1.4%	4	23.5%	5	3.7%	1	1.9%
	Very crucial	81	39.1%	4	23.5%	53	39.6%	25	46.3%
	Frequently	45	21.7%	2	11.8%	28	20.9%	11	20.4%

How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children?	Never	15	7.2%	1	5.9%	13	9.7%	8	14.8%
	Occasionally	73	35.3%	4	23.5%	52	38.8%	13	24.1%
	Rarely	55	26.6%	7	41.2%	28	20.9%	7	13.0%
	Very frequently	19	9.2%	3	17.6%	13	9.7%	15	27.8%
What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Frequently	44	21.3%	2	11.8%	24	17.9%	11	20.4%
	Never	18	8.7%	2	11.8%	14	10.4%	11	20.4%
	Occasionally	88	42.5%	4	23.5%	55	41.0%	13	24.1%
	Rarely	42	20.3%	5	29.4%	26	19.4%	6	11.1%
	Very frequently	15	7.2%	4	23.5%	15	11.2%	13	24.1%
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaborations?	Effective	64	30.9%	1	5.9%	37	27.6%	10	18.5%
	Ineffective	18	8.7%	3	17.6%	19	14.2%	4	7.4%
	Moderately effective	94	45.4%	8	47.1%	55	41.0%	17	31.5%

n with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children?	Very effective	28	13.5%	4	23.5%	16	11.9%	16	29.6%
	Very ineffective	3	1.4%	1	5.9%	7	5.2%	7	13.0%
What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice?	Defined roles and responsibilities	30	14.5%	3	17.6%	16	11.9%	6	11.1%
	Open communication	66	31.9%	5	29.4%	35	26.1%	25	46.3%
	Shared vision and goals	38	18.4%	4	23.5%	36	26.9%	5	9.3%
	Trust and respect among partners	66	31.9%	4	23.5%	36	26.9%	13	24.1%
	Variety of resources and expertise	7	3.4%	1	5.9%	11	8.2%	5	9.3%
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating		2	1.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.5%	3	5.6%
	Never	12	5.8%	2	11.8%	13	9.7%	8	14.8%
	Occasionally	86	41.5%	6	35.3%	49	36.6%	15	27.8%
	Often	45	21.7%	1	5.9%	27	20.1%	10	18.5%

and monitoring initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?	Rarely	40	19.3%	5	29.4%	26	19.4%	9	16.7%
	Very often	22	10.6%	3	17.6%	17	12.7%	9	16.7%
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Effective	56	27.1%	3	17.6%	37	27.6%	9	16.7%
	Ineffective	20	9.7%	2	11.8%	17	12.7%	5	9.3%
	Moderately effective	106	51.2%	9	52.9%	62	46.3%	18	33.3%
	Very effective	23	11.1%	2	11.8%	16	11.9%	18	33.3%
	Very ineffective	2	1.0%	1	5.9%	2	1.5%	4	7.4%
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child	Applying insights to practice and policy	20	9.7%	2	11.8%	21	15.7%	7	13.0%
	Data collection issues	44	21.3%	4	23.5%	27	20.1%	12	22.2%
	Inefficient training	43	20.8%	2	11.8%	27	20.1%	7	13.0%

welfare services?	Lack of resources	72	34.8%	8	47.1%	36	26.9%	22	40.7%
	Resistance to change	28	13.5%	1	5.9%	23	17.2%	6	11.1%
In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Actively involving communities	64	30.9%	3	17.6%	28	20.9%	12	22.2%
	Collaborating with professionals	20	9.7%	1	5.9%	8	6.0%	6	11.1%
	Coordinated network of services	37	17.9%	4	23.5%	28	20.9%	12	22.2%
	Early help and preventive measures	65	31.4%	5	29.4%	54	40.3%	21	38.9%
	Investing in the training and development	21	10.1%	4	23.5%	16	11.9%	3	5.6%
In your opinion, which kind of	Advocacy at policy levels	39	18.8%	2	11.8%	20	14.9%	10	18.5%
	Conducting workshops	23	11.1%	2	11.8%	14	10.4%	10	18.5%

intervention best advances the rights of children?	for parents only								
	Implementi ng Child Rights- Based Approach (CRBA)	52	25.1%	7	41.2%	51	38.1%	14	25.9%
	Offering counselling services only	59	28.5%	5	29.4%	29	21.6%	13	24.1%
	Solely providing financial support	34	16.4%	1	5.9%	20	14.9%	7	13.0%

Here's a summary of the two tables:

Understanding Ethical Obligations

- Most respondents across all qualification levels understand ethical obligations "somewhat" or "well."
- PhD holders had the highest proportion of respondents indicating a "very well" understanding (35.3%), while bachelor's degree holders had the lowest (20.3%).
- A small proportion in all groups reported poor understanding.

Challenges in Ethical Commitments

- The most common challenge across qualification levels was balancing professional boundaries with empathy (highest among bachelor's degree holders, 32.9%).
- Advocating for social justice and children's rights was a key difficulty for PhD holders (35.3%) and those with only higher secondary education (27.8%).

- Ensuring confidentiality and privacy was more challenging for those with lower qualifications.

External Pressures on Ethical Standards

- The Chi-square test ($p = .011$) shows a significant relationship between qualification level and experiencing external pressures in maintaining ethical standards.
- Many respondents reported facing ethical challenges "sometimes" or "often," with those having only higher secondary education experiencing this "very often" (31.5%).

Familiarity with Legal Frameworks

- Familiarity with child protection laws was relatively low across all education levels.
- PhD holders were the most likely to be "very familiar" (29.4%), while those with bachelor's degrees had the highest percentage of "neutral" responses (34.8%).

Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks

- Most respondents rated legal frameworks as "moderately" or "well" supporting their ethical commitments.
- However, PhD holders had the highest percentage indicating that legal frameworks support them "very well" (23.5%).

Training and Preparedness

- Legal knowledge was considered the most beneficial training across all qualification levels.
- Ethical decision-making frameworks were also highly valued, particularly among master's degree holders (30.6%).
- Child welfare training programs were rated as "moderately well" or "well" in preparing professionals.

Public Awareness and Advocacy

- Public awareness was widely seen as "very crucial" to strengthening child protection (highest among master's degree holders at 39.6%).

- Participation in public awareness initiatives was inconsistent, with many respondents engaging only "occasionally."

Collaboration and Social Services

- Open communication and trust among partners were the most valued factors for effective collaboration.
- Social services were generally rated as "neutral" in inclusivity, but those with higher secondary education found them more exclusive.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Lack of resources was the most commonly cited difficulty in evaluating child welfare services.
- Most respondents found monitoring programs "moderately effective" in improving social work practices.

Interventions and Strategies

- The Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA) was seen as the most effective intervention across qualification levels.
- Early help and preventive measures were also widely regarded as effective strategies.

Table 13 Pearson Chi-square Tests

Pearson Chi-Square Tests

		What is the highest level of qualification you possess?
How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting	Chi-square	18.918
	Df	12

vulnerable children's social security and human rights?	Sig.	.091 ^{a,b}
Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children?	Chi-square	15.672
	Df	12
	Sig.	.207 ^a
How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizational, societal)?	Chi-square	25.793
	Df	12
	Sig.	.011 ^{a,b,*}
What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field?	Chi-square	18.371
	Df	12
	Sig.	.105 ^a
How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to vulnerable children?	Chi-square	42.166
	Df	12
	Sig.	.000 ^{a,b,*}
For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance?	Chi-square	40.339
	Df	12
	Sig.	.000 ^{a,b,*}
How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues?	Chi-square	18.337
	Df	12
	Sig.	.106 ^{a,b}
Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating ethical obligations?	Chi-square	16.469
	Df	12
	Sig.	.171 ^a

What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your region?	Chi-square	21.742
	Df	12
	Sig.	.041 ^{a,b,*}
What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various backgrounds in your social work practice?	Chi-square	23.025
	Df	12
	Sig.	.028 ^{a,b,*}
How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of children who are at risk?	Chi-square	38.070
	Df	12
	Sig.	.000 ^{a,b,*}
How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	26.284
	Df	12
	Sig.	.010 ^{a,*}
What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations?	Chi-square	27.196
	Df	12
	Sig.	.007 ^{a,*}
What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children?	Chi-square	33.863
	Df	12
	Sig.	.001 ^{a,b,*}
What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice?	Chi-square	18.363
	Df	12
	Sig.	.105 ^{a,b}
How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring	Chi-square	17.581
	Df	15

initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?	Sig.	.285 ^{a,b}
How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children?	Chi-square	31.595
	Df	12
	Sig.	.002 ^{a,b,*}
What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child welfare services?	Chi-square	10.253
	Df	12
	Sig.	.594 ^a
In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk?	Chi-square	13.104
	Df	12
	Sig.	.362 ^a
In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children?	Chi-square	11.941
	Df	12
	Sig.	.450 ^a

Results are based on nonempty rows and columns in each innermost subtable.

*. The Chi-square statistic is significant at the .05 level.

a. More than 20% of cells in this subtable have expected cell counts less than 5. Chi-square results may be invalid.

b. The minimum expected cell count in this subtable is less than one. Chi-square results may be invalid.

The Pearson Chi-Square tests reveal significant associations between the highest level of qualification and various ethical considerations in social work with vulnerable children. Notably, qualification levels influence challenges faced due to external pressures ($p = .011$), perceptions of legal frameworks in supporting ethical commitments ($p = .000$), and their effectiveness in resolving dilemmas ($p = .000$). Significant relationships also exist for views

on social service inclusivity ($p = .041$), confidence in meeting children's needs ($p = .028$), and public awareness in strengthening child rights ($p = .000$). Furthermore, qualification levels affect participation in awareness initiatives ($p = .010$), coordination with other professionals ($p = .007$), collaboration effectiveness ($p = .001$), and perceptions of monitoring and evaluation programs ($p = .002$). However, some results, such as understanding ethical obligations ($p = .091$) and training program preparation ($p = .106$), were not statistically significant. Additionally, some Chi-square results may be unreliable due to low expected cell counts, suggesting the need for alternative statistical approaches.

The findings highlight the significant role of social workers in ensuring social security and human rights for vulnerable children. While many professionals demonstrate a solid understanding of ethical obligations, challenges persist in advocacy, collaboration, and balancing professional boundaries. The results underscore the need for improved training programs, policy reforms, and better legal frameworks to support ethical decision-making.

Public awareness is also a crucial factor, with many respondents recognizing its role in strengthening child protection efforts. However, the inclusivity of social services remains a concern, suggesting that targeted interventions are needed to ensure that all vulnerable children, including those in poverty, with disabilities, and refugees, receive adequate support.

Legal frameworks, although moderately effective, require further development to bridge existing gaps in implementation. Strengthening inter-agency collaboration and enhancing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will be essential for improving the overall efficacy of social work practices related to child welfare. Future research should focus on identifying and addressing systemic barriers to ethical social work practices to ensure sustainable improvements in social security and human rights for vulnerable children.

4.11 Conclusion

The study outlines the ethical duties of social workers to help protect the social security and human rights of vulnerable children. The introduction explains the study's goals, which are to assess social services, find vulnerable groups, and look at the laws that govern them. The approach uses descriptive, inferential, and qualitative methods to learn about demographics, ethical issues, and how policies work. The majority of the respondents are male (61.7%), between 20 and 29 years old (69.7%), and have a bachelor's degree (50.2%). Most of them

have worked for 3-5 years (72.6%) and are based in urban areas (59.0%). The main areas where they are skilled are family support services (26.2%) and advocating for children's rights (22.6%). While social workers generally understand their ethical duties, some important issues remain, such as finding a balance between professionalism and empathy (27.9%) and supporting children's rights (27.4%). External factors also make it harder to decide what is right, as 40.8% of respondents said they face such challenges "sometimes." The study points out that social services are not fully inclusive for most people, as only 15% rated them as such. It is considered very important for the public to be aware of child protection, but not many people take part in these initiatives. People believe that legal frameworks are moderately effective, but how well they are known and used is not the same for everyone, with 34.2% being neutral. Many people believe that training programs are useful, mainly for gaining legal knowledge (33.0%) and making ethical decisions (21.4%). Working together with other agencies is not always very effective, and open communication and trust are seen as the main reasons. Thematic analysis points out that gender matters a lot in shaping people's views on ethics and their confidence. Younger workers tend to experience different issues and have different views than their older colleagues. The document ends by urging for stronger laws, more training, and better monitoring to overcome the main challenges and improve services for children. All in all, the study gives useful information about social work ethics and suggests ways to improve policies and practices.

CHAPTER 5:

DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion Of Results

This chapter demonstrates how this approach would be used to examine the way that the ethical obligations of social workers influence the enhancement of social security and human rights of the vulnerable children. The analysis is constructed in order to cope with the goals of the research, which are; focusing on the present situation of social security and human rights of vulnerable children, grouping the children based on their difference and focusing on the social policies and laws already in existence to govern them. To come up with significant results, several various procedures, such as descriptive and qualitative analysis, are conducted. With the help of descriptive statistics, it is possible to summarise the demographic data and the attitudes of people towards the ethics, legislation and the ways of how ethical problems should be handled. Two examples of statistic methods that are applied by the scientists in research studies are chi-square tests and logistic regression to examine how or whether the experience and training of professionals can help them in handling ethical problems. Also, qualitative thematic analysis enables the researcher to have a better understanding of the issues that affect social workers, the drivers of policy failure, and the best approaches that the social workers adopt. The objectives of the techniques that are being applied in this article have been identified in order to identify the most influential individuals in the social work field, identify any gaps in the policies and also define the ways to improve the social security and rights of the vulnerable children.

Table 1 presented below is the breakdown of the study participants into their own individual characteristics. Most of the participants to the survey are males (61.7%), and the individuals in the 20-29 years age group represent the highest percentage (69.7%). Three out of every five individuals involved in the survey had three to five years of experience with seventy-two point six percent indicating that half of the individuals took a bachelors degree. What they did entailed offering support to families, support children rights, and mentally health assistance. It is approximated that about 46 per cent of the social workers were full time employed and most of them were employed in urban areas (59%). They are of utmost importance as they give points of reference when analysing the views of the respondents. Probably, younger and more experienced employees in the industry often face ethical dilemmas in the course of their daily

activities, but it is also possible that they have not encountered serious ethical dilemmas yet (Featherstone, 2014; Reamer, 2013). The literature states that urban practitioners are influenced by stricter and more bureaucratic rules and regulations that may impact their responsiveness and ethical behavior (Domitrovich, 2017). These statements are in line with the literature as presented by the big number of urban responses. In the area of education, most of the respondents who were surveyed had attained some form of tertiary education: fifty-two percent of them were the holders with the bachelor degree, thirty two point five percent with the masters degree, thirteen point one percent with the higher secondary education and the four point one percent with the doctorate education. The percentage of individuals between the 6-10 years experience (8.3%) shows that there are a small number of respondents who had 11-15 years experience (5.6%), and the same percentage encountered above 15 years experience (13.6%). The majority of the respondents (3/4) was between three and five years of experience. Regarding expertise areas, most respondents were concerned about the family support services whose proportion was 26.2% of the total. In second place was child rights and protection advocacy with 22.6 of the total and the rest of the respondents were distributed pretty evenly into mental health care services, the child welfare service delivery and child adoption services. Others were hired on a full-time basis whereas others were hired on a part-time basis, others were hired as per diem staff whereas others were hired in a contract basis or under a temporary basis. It was established that most of the respondents have set their location of work in urban regions (59.0%); only a small percentage had it in suburban regions (13.6%), rural regions (16.5%), and multiple regions (10.9%).

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social justice and the rights of children and strike a balance between the working limits and showing empathy. External factors may also result in trouble in following the ethical standards with forty-eight percent of individuals stating that it occurs Sometimes and fifteen-five percent vehemently agree with this.

In this table, the three best commitments which are tricky to be honored are featured in the table. According to the findings of the study, the two major issues based on which social workers had to struggle were keeping clear boundaries between their professional and personal feelings (27.9%) and Supporting social justice and the rights of children (27.4%). Although the most crucial challenges were not the management of confidential situations and the prevention of the conflicts of interest, it was considered. Considering the fact that it highlights the importance of these conundrums, this is aligned with the findings that have been identified in the literature on ethics within the social work (Featherstone, 2014; Rogowski, 2012). The author states that whenever structural inequality is combined with emotional needs of child protection workers, ethical issues may occur (Ife 2022). This evidence confirms that advocacy and boundary issues are prevalent everywhere in the world, which agrees with the opinion of Ife.

Table 4 specifies the level at which the social services are available to every person. Fifteen percent of the polled individuals felt that the social services were totally inclusive, whereas forty three point two percent were of the view that social services lacked the aspect of inclusivity. This is what caused that the scores were generally neutral. Although social protection mechanisms exist, they often do not help neediest persons especially when they are children belonging to the minority groups, displaced families or disabled families (Gabel, 2012; Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2009). It is one of the findings that has been consistently evidenced by studies carried out in the area. Still, the study proves that it is not always so in practice, although the CRC itself is devoted to equal treatment of the people and offering them equal opportunities.

All the respondents (39.6 percent) identified very crucial and 26.2 percent identified crucial and highlighted the importance of people being aware of the need to protect children in the communities they live in. This is the view that is supported by the studies and research. The researcher has concluded that primary approaches are advocacy and awareness to foster child rights and prevent stigma (Rogowski, 2012; Reamer, 2013). The observation of the view in the

literature that educating individuals is associated with effective support and change of policies is supported by data gathered. Although the survey did not group children by categories, the survey results show that social workers face some challenges in the representation of representatives of different people. Given that the most challenging ethical obligation was to agree with the rights of children (27.4 pound) and weighting personal emotions against professional ethics (27.9 pound), it implies that not all children in poverty, with disabilities or displaced areas may receive the necessary help. Moreover, a significant amount of respondents also observed that the current laws were somewhat beneficial, as only 11.9% believed that they were supportive with the degree of very well. Only a half of the respondents (47.1) rated these frameworks as either Moderate support and nearly one in every seven (13.3) believed that they were generally not very helpful, nor useless. This implies that the various groups of parties of vulnerable children may not have adequate policies.

Table 7 explains understanding of the law system. One-third (34.2) of the respondents did not have a strong opinion on the familiarity with legal rules and only 14.3% said they were very familiar with the same. It is because the individual is yet to understand the rules of law with regard to child protection. According to the authors, each social worker is expected to be familiar with the law (Healy, 2020). Although the fundamental role that both the CRC and the national laws play in children in the realization of their rights, not all the professionals have it in their nature and that is where there is a need to continue learning, as Hodgkin and Newell (2007) and Pecora (2018) suggest. Table 8 reveals the relationship between the ethical standard of industries and the law and regulations. Only less than 12 per cent of the respondents believed that legal frameworks were also effective (Very effective), and 47 per cent thought that they were only potentially effective (Very moderate). It implies that despite the fact that there are rules, most social workers feel that this is not sufficient to deal with ethical dilemmas. This is also the case with the literature where numerous policies are proving to be effective in theory but not in practice (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2009). The policies must have the ability to adapt to new conditions and obtain the required funding, however, the results of the survey indicate the opposite.

Thematic Discoveries and the Differences in Men's and Women's Experience A chi-square analysis found a significant link between gender and people's perception of ethical duties, outside influences, and the success of legal rules. There were findings that female social workers recognized ethics better and were presented with more pressure from outside sources. It demonstrates how literature on social work discusses gender issues. Buka (2022) and

Featherstone (2014) explain that women in caregiving often deal with extra ethical problems and conflicting tasks, since they are more likely to work in these fields. According to these findings, ethics training should be based on intersectional approaches. Less than 12 percent of the respondents believed that legal structures were most effective (Very), and 47 percent believed they were moderately so. It implies that despite the presence of rules, there are still a lot of social workers who think that they do not have enough rules to deal with ethical issues. This is also evident in literature as the majority of policies prove to be effective on paper but fail in real life (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2009). The policies must be capable of adapting to new conditions and receiving the funding required but the outcomes of the survey seem not to indicate so.

Monitoring and evaluation programs are effective when they are conducted through the social work practices. The results indicate that current evaluation systems are seen to be effective; however, much more needs to be done. Poor training procedure, inability to collect information and lack of sufficient resources are some of the issues that are bedeviling these programs. Such hindrances could be enhanced through reforms and additional investment in evaluating tools that could lead to improved decisions and better output among children. Based on this research, it is evident that social workers have ethical issues to handle as they are assisted by appropriate legal provisions, training initiatives, and collaboration with other agencies. Although professionals are well informed about ethics, there are still other vices that exist due to pressure, regulations, and lack of resources. Increasing the difficulty of rules, dissemination of information and strengthening supervision will help to increase the social and human rights of the vulnerable children. The primary issues that influence the ethical practices are to be investigated and resolved in the future research to continue providing child welfare service over a long period. Researchers have recognized this as a subject. Jones et al. (2009) and Shura (2008) indicate that in developing countries in order to have an effective monitoring process in place, there should be good infrastructure, qualified personnel and strong political will which are hardly found in such countries. These fears are validated by the information and where necessary changes need to be made. It is based on the literature and theoretical approach discussed in the dissertation that the results can be properly interpreted in the role of gender on ethical, legal, and professional issues facing those who support vulnerable children. The information that the chi-square analysis brought up upholds both both what is talked about in

Chapter II concerning social theories and ethics and what is described in Chapter I concerning the ethics requirements.

Because gender was very significant influencing the perceptions of ethical obligations in participants, this is consistent with the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which states that behavior is determined by personal attitudes and the way that people understand what other people think. Writers in the literature posit that female social workers may take responsibility of ethical deeds under another dimension by virtue of the society. These roles have more likely to influence the increased consciousness of ethics in child welfare as described in the section of dissertation that has discussed the ethical responsibilities. As per these findings, Reamer (2013) considers and espouses that both professional and personal values may influence the concept of right or wrong in matters relating to ethics. Gender and moral matters that occurred in the workplace and there were gender disparities on how to respond to external requests to behave ethically ($\chi^2(8) = 31.442, p = .000$), which align with the topic of social structure and its influence on various individuals in the dissertation.

Social workers may find themselves vulnerable to the additional professional and social gaze, thus the social worker may find it difficult to cope with ethical problems. The fifth page (49-50 of the document) demonstrates that gender disparities within the system are inclined to make ethics a more significant burden of female doctors as compared to their male counterparts. The structure established by the laws and the perception and belief in diversity Their beliefs about the social justice were influenced by their gender ($\chi^2(8) = 15.904, p = .044$) and the confidence to care about children of different backgrounds ($\chi^2(8) = 17.338, p = .027$). The literature indicates the way we are able to view these findings in terms of the Social Justice Theory. The attitudes of a social worker to the legal system and employment with diverse people are peculiar to an individual and determined by their gender. With female social workers, they tend to be more familiar with the issues of children in the disadvantaged groups and that affects their opinions of the available aids in the law and their capacity to intervene (Van den Bos, 2003; Featherstone, 2014).

The results make it evident that gender correlates with the rate of having contact with other professionals related to ethics. It was noted that collaboration with other agencies helps (see Section 1.1.3), however, the manner and frequency of how individuals interact with one another do so as well depending upon gender, as well. This means that women in this field would tend to pay particular attention to the idea of collaboration with the community, which is also

characteristic of the strategies suggested by Rogers and Germain. There seems to be that the impacts of gender difference to the social and cultural perspective may be observed in their responses regarding monitoring and interventions towards the rights of children. Both models mentioned in the dissertation on ethics hold that the ethics of matters in a decision are affected by not only rules but personal or social backgrounds, as well (Banks, 2020; Antle, 2005). Gender assists in defining the perception of social workers towards their ethics and whether some interventions are right and justified in various and complicated societies. It was remarkable that gender did not influence the opinion of participating in events connected to the public, education or being aware of some laws. This is possibly because of the fact that the knowledge that members of any gender possess is equal, which means that they may be getting prepared by standardized training. Despite the few similarities existing in varied environments as highlighted in the representative findings, the manner in which research is conducted usually relies on the gender of an individual.

The results demonstrate that both the Human Society Theory and TRA have been utilized appropriately in the dissertation by demonstrating the way gender affects the subjective norms, cognition about subjective ethical issues, and the social relationships. The child welfare education and policy should also take into consideration gender issues- as part of one of the primary issues in Chapter 1.4. It is stated in the document that practices where practitioners regard their own identities to be both effective and fair (Hage, 2005; Kenny and Hage, 2009). The chi-square test yields the results that there are obviously dissimilarities in various areas that revolve around ethics and laws in working with vulnerable children. The statistics are very clear that the percentage of ethical situations experienced by participants in the various age groups due to the outside influence occurs differently ($p < 0.05$), the comprehension of the laws of child protection occurs differently ($p < 0.05$), and the level of support by the law affects decision making of participants differently ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, significant disparities in the effectiveness of legal regulations in the ethical behavioral consideration ($\chi^2 = 48.818$, $p < 0.001$), usefulness of training programs in ethical behavioral consideration ($\chi^2 = 28.588$, $p = 0.027$), and the intensity of the effort in forming an ethical behavior in respect to other professionals are observed ($\chi^2 = 28.545$, $p = 0.027$). Based on these findings young lawyers will know the current legislation, and an experienced attorney will struggle to abide by outdated regulations. It seems that the social pressures or the organizational pressures affect some age groups even more, maybe due to the fact that individuals in such age groups have varying career demands. The results point out the fact that all individuals in the social work require

proper training on law and ethics. Nevertheless, there is a risk that the chi-square results would not be reliable in case the calculated numbers too small, that is why, it is needed that they should be re-calculated with the help of greater sample sizes or it is possible to test other methods of data analysis.

In the case of the study, the majority of participants have responded that they were very familiar with their ethical duties or obligations, irrespective of their level of education. Notably, individuals with PhDs were those recording the highest percentage of very well in regard to comprehending it (35.3%), compared to other study groups with bachelor of degrees who had only 20.3%. Therefore, good education seems to make sharp the perception of ethics, as Reamer (2013) clarifies the importance of ethical literacy in addressing different cases in child welfare. TRA indicates that education affects the way professionals feel and perceive ethical conduct which prompts them to select a given act. It is hard to uphold ethical standards in most instances and the majority of respondents indicated that the problem is empathy getting intertwined with professional boundaries and this was the most reported by those with bachelor degrees (32.9%). It highlights the fact that the social work can not be easy as one may easily be objective and kind, which is brought up by Banks (2020) in his systems of ethical decision making (Sections 1-3). The process of advocating the rights and social justice of children was a challenge among PhD holders and those who obtained higher education only (27.8 and 35.3 percent respectively). This finding is consistent with the Social Justice Theory which, according to the theory, informing oneself of evil in education is likely to increase personal ethical consciousness, particularly the people in the highest or lowest stage of their education.

Statistical analysis showed that there is a correlation between educational background and having felt the pressure of the outside to follow ethical standards ($p = .011$). Out of all the respondents, individuals who had secondary education and higher reported that they encountered this type of pressure very frequently (31.5%). Perhaps frontline workers who are experiencing these problems lack the necessary support provided by the hospital, and that is why Healy (2020) sees empowered frontline workers as a crucial component. This evidence helps to prove the theory of Human Society. This theory suggests that sense of ethics and stress levels among the workers in the workplace are influenced by the unbalanced social structures and power disparities at the workplace. It was found out that people of different education levels and experience possessed very little knowledge concerning the laws governing the protection of children. The proportion of people who responded that they had a good grasp of data science was considerably higher among persons with a doctoral degree (29.4%), as

compared to the persons with a bachelor's degree, who comprised of the highest number of people within the neutral category (34.8%). As outlined by TRA, Hale et al. (2002) put it that knowledge and skills of a person influence his or her belief in executing their duties. It also makes people doubt whether the education received by social workers in the undergraduate level is enough to make them handle legal matters. Regarding steering their morality, most of the respondents found the legal regulations useful. The only omission in this was those, possessing a doctoral degree, who indicated that 23.5% of them found the rules to be very well supportive. Therefore, possessing more academic qualifications can be of help to the individuals in handling laws and legal tools better. This is in line with the proposal by Shura in 2008, which offers that more legal knowledge can help in improved ethics in practice. It however also brings out the point that legal education should be integrated even earlier training programs.

Legal knowledge was considered by all students, with or without the level of education, as the most beneficial in training, and tools on ethical decisions were viewed as the most essential in the group of people with a master firm education (30.6%). In most cases, people believed that child welfare training programs performed a satisfactory or satisfactory role of training qualified professionals. The conclusions match the premises discussed by Gambrill (2012), which include the importance of using research and collaboration to locate solutions to the modern ethical issues. All the participants except those with a master degree (39.6) concurred that raising awareness among the population was highly important in securing the safety of children.

Nevertheless, even though it was unanimously agreed that there were numerous efforts, the intensity of action on these programs varied, whereby people used to attend them occasionally. This indicates that despite the awareness of inequalities in many people, they are yet to do something to stop them, according to research (Costello, 2015; Featherstone, 2014). This is one issue that has been cited in literature. The Social Justice Theory shows that social workers should engage the general population in order to make a tangible difference. The single most significant issue that contributed to the successful collaboration was open communication and trust that existed between the various stakeholders. Inclusivity as a concept in social work, however, was considered differently by the respondents in the higher secondary level who indicated that it was more exclusive. This aligns with the notion of interprofessional collaboration and the Transdisciplinary Team Representation (TRA) which implies that the perception of support and control is a significant aspect of the good ethics and collaboration.

The first challenge that was the most reported throughout the practice of monitoring and evaluation was the lack of the needed resources. Although most of the individuals rated monitoring programs as providing moderate effectiveness, this remains to show that there are barriers that do not allow effective feedback and accountability. According to the subscribers of the Human Society Theory, issues of such kind do not allow under-served populations to be treated fairly and to receive the relevant services. Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA) is the approach which was widely accepted as the most efficient way to deliver the help to children, who were registered in any type of educational program.

It became evident that both of the approaches were positive as research started showing that their preventive measures and early assistance can effectively help in the long run period (Jones et al., 2009; UNICEF, 2012). According to the standards presented in the CRC and the main aspects that were touched upon in Chapter 1.1.1 on ethics and the process of systemic change, the application of the approaches that focus on rights and prevention is employed. Based on the results of the Pearson Chi-Square tests, it would seem that many of the ethical issues are directly related to the maximum education level a social worker has.

In addition, qualification could affect the issues that are caused by external stressors ($p = .011$), how a company perceives the role of laws in helping with ethics ($p = .000$) and how disputes are solved ($p = .000$). Feelings about being aware of actions to empower the rights of children ($p = .000$) have a significant correlation with the feelings of being sure that the needs of children will be fulfilled ($p = .028$), the attitude towards making social services available to all people ($p = .041$). Moreover, the qualification attained by a particular individual is also an important factor in their engagement in awareness activities, their success in cooperating with other specialists, the level of successful cooperation, and their attitudes towards the means of monitoring and assessment (all of them are statistically significant at $p < .05$). However, some of the outcomes were not statistically significant. One of them was the knowledge of what makes ethical behaviour and training preparation programs ($p = .091$ and $.106$, respectively). In some cases, Chi-square analyses may not work to ensure reliability and accuracy because of low numbers in the cells; hence it is useful to use various forms of statistical tests.

5.2 Discussion Of Research Question One

What are the key ethical obligations of social workers in promoting the social security and human rights of vulnerable children?

Social workers are highly tasked with the responsibility of taking care of the needs and rights of vulnerable children. All work is performed based on dignity, the justice, and the best interest of the child. Quite often, children need to be secured by eliminating neglect, abuse, exploitation, and discrimination. In the event that the rights of the children may by any chance be at risk, it is the social workers who would act first and ensure that the children are in safe hands. We should also ensure that we observe the rule of non-discrimination. Several susceptible children are unable to utilize simple facilities due to the barriers in their life and within the area they reside. They should confront these inequalities to assist in establishing the rules that address the needs of all children. Because these are human rights of children, parents ought to ensure that their children receive healthcare, education, place to stay and litigation. None of them should take part in decisions regarding their future which are to be made by social workers as well in accordance with ethics. They should observe what children think, should ensure that they do not attempt to participate without their consent and should also ensure that children express themselves safely. When social workers share details, it is quite important that they maintain some of this information as confidential. The involvement of social workers in families, communities, and other organizations is also useful in that the youngsters can be helped and protected. They need to aspire to good changes and as well as give donations to assist kids. The ethics of social workers primarily assist in guaranteeing equality, equal rights, and secure places of children in all locations.

5.3 Discussion Of Research Question Two

What challenges do social workers face in fulfilling these obligations, and how do they navigate ethical dilemmas in their practice?

Social workers are mostly faced with difficult situations where they are required to accomplish their ethical duties with people at risk. Among other things, it is one of the tasks to ensure that the decisions made are not taken in the best interest without affecting the right of people. In the case of child abuse or domestic violence, social workers should ensure that the information about their clients does not disseminate too widely, at the same time ensuring that the people

at risk are protected and secured. This can create difficult scenarios since the counselor has to make the choice of either providing space to the client or working to prevent harm. The health systems have a significant number of problems in lack of money and resources. A limited budget, excessive number of cases, and under institutional support might leave a social worker without surpassing his duty and making right moral choices. Under-resourced environments might involve lack of resources, which may make social workers concentrate on certain cases and spend scarce resources, which may not be in line with their professional value. When the society imposes additional pressures, it may be difficult to make decisions regarding what is right. Since social workers are sometimes required to work in numerous diverse locations, they are at times put in such a situation where cultural practices contradict the professional regulations. The social workers might become the victims of opposition or enmity by protecting the cause of women or LGBTQ+ rights within the communities, which are committed to the principles of conservatism. Social workers address such situations with references to the ethical regulations that are suggested by the NASW Code of Ethics, as well as other local regulations. The observation by other individuals, the advice of colleagues, and new training allow practitioners to retain the necessary attitude and follow the correct behavior. In order to promote human dignity and justice, social workers promote open discussions, critical thinking, and meet the needs of every client. They never compromise the need to adhere to moral standards and this is a significant role in enabling them to empower and assist the marginalized individuals.

5.4 Discussion Of Research Question Three

What strategies or interventions show promise in enhancing the effectiveness of social work practice with vulnerable children?

The findings of this study highlight several key strategies and interventions that significantly enhance the effectiveness of social work practice with vulnerable children. These strategies are consistent with both the empirical findings of the study and the broader literature on child welfare and social work practice.

One of the most prominent approaches identified is trauma-informed care, which recognizes the profound impact of adverse childhood experiences on emotional, psychological, and behavioral development. The study findings suggest that social workers who adopt trauma-sensitive practices—such as creating safe environments, building trust, and using therapeutic

interventions—are better able to support children in coping with trauma and fostering resilience.

Another critical strategy is the strengths-based approach, which shifts the focus from deficits to the inherent capacities and resilience of children and their families. The results indicate that when social workers actively engage children and families in identifying their strengths, it enhances self-efficacy, empowerment, and long-term positive outcomes. This aligns with the study's emphasis on ethical practice, particularly the principles of dignity and empowerment.

The study also underscores the importance of family-centered practice, where families are treated as active partners rather than passive recipients of services. Findings reveal that involving families in decision-making processes improves engagement, trust, and sustainability of interventions. This approach is particularly effective in addressing systemic and contextual factors contributing to child vulnerability.

Furthermore, interprofessional collaboration emerged as a key intervention. The complexity of issues faced by vulnerable children—such as poverty, abuse, and social exclusion—requires coordinated efforts across sectors including education, healthcare, and legal systems. The findings demonstrate that collaborative approaches lead to more comprehensive and holistic service delivery.

The integration of technology in social work practice is another promising development. Tools such as telehealth, digital communication platforms, and online support systems help overcome barriers related to accessibility, especially in underserved or remote areas. The study findings suggest that technology enhances communication, continuity of care, and service reach.

Finally, advocacy and policy-level interventions play a crucial role in improving practice effectiveness. Social workers are not only service providers but also agents of change who address structural inequalities. The study highlights that engagement in policy advocacy and awareness-building contributes to long-term systemic improvements in child welfare.

Overall, the findings suggest that a multi-dimensional approach, combining trauma-informed care, strengths-based and family-centred practices, interprofessional collaboration, technological integration, and policy advocacy, is essential for enhancing the effectiveness of social work practice. These strategies collectively contribute to improved protection, empowerment, and well-being of vulnerable children.

CHAPTER 6:

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

After conducting research, the study found that social workers play a significant role in enhancing the social security and human rights of children who are vulnerable. The field of social work is heavily reliant on ethical principles, advocating for the rights of individuals, and advancing the cause of justice and equality. Children, who are vulnerable, such as those who are victims of poverty, abuse, neglect, being displaced, or social exclusion, typically do not achieve their basic rights and well-being if they do not receive support from professionals. Based on Sadzaglishvili's research (2021), the objective of this study was to provide an explanation of the ethical and legal responsibilities that social workers are expected to fulfil in their role to assist children, as well as the challenges that they face and the strategies that they employ to overcome these obstacles. Social workers are responsible for safeguarding children and advocating on their behalf. To ensure that children's rights are protected from any and all forms of injustice, they intend to alter entire systems entirely. This area of study has, from the very beginning, made it clear that children are particularly vulnerable in a variety of ways. According to Mapp et al.'s 2019 research, children who are subjected to abuse or who also suffer from a lack of resources are more likely to have their rights violated because they are overly dependent on adults. In situations where social protection systems in a region are either inadequate or not adhered to in the appropriate manner, the impact of this weakness gets worse. According to Sanders (2021), social workers play a crucial role in this context by providing essential services and by promoting the rights and dignity of children through actions that are responsible and ethical. The study also took into consideration the primary responsibilities that social workers ought to adhere to in this research. The importance of ethics in social work became abundantly clear after following the guidelines established by organisations such as the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and national regulators. In order to deal with situations in which different interests and values come into conflict with one another, social workers rely on fundamental ethical principles such as respect for individuals, the importance of relationships, honesty, and the possession of the necessary skills. In point of fact, there may be a conflict between the need to speak out about child abuse or neglect and the desire to maintain the confidentiality of a child's identity. In these kinds of circumstances, it is

necessary to evaluate the situation while paying attention to the rules, as well as the impact that actions can have on the lives and emotions of other people.

In the course of my reading, it became abundantly clear that social workers are confronted with a wide range of professional, ethical, and legal challenges. These challenges are more difficult to manage because they are compounded by additional challenges from the outside, restrictions from the organisation, a lack of resources, and cultural or community norms. It has been observed that a significant number of counsellors frequently struggle with the challenge of balancing their professional responsibilities with the emotions of their clients. In spite of the fact that it is essential to empathise with vulnerable children in order to establish a connection with them, an excessive amount of emotion can prevent you from making the appropriate decisions and from upholding professional standards. As a result, it is essential to continue training social workers so that they can strike a balance between their feelings and the work that they do (Mayaka, 2021). In this study, the laws that pertain to social work were thoroughly examined. When it comes to making interventions that are ethically sound, these laws and policies serve as the foundation. Nevertheless, individuals who work in the legal profession may develop a familiarity with these laws and interpret them in a variety of different ways. According to the findings of the study, individuals who had completed their doctoral studies reported feeling more prepared and knowledgeable about the legal framework than those who had only completed their secondary education. Due to the fact that there is a gap, it is absolutely necessary for all social work programs to incorporate standardised legal education. In addition, social workers from all different groups concurred with the sentiment that it is frequently impossible to have clear rules to assist with difficult cases. This sentiment is in line with what has been written in the literature on child protection. According to the findings of the analysis, gender had a significant influence on the manner in which ethics were perceived, the pressures that were experienced outside of the workplace, and the degree of confidence that female and male practitioners had in addressing the various requirements of children (Sobočan, 2019). It was observed that a significant number of female participants exhibited a greater concern for the rights of children and worked more willingly with their colleagues. This viewpoint is in agreement with the social justice theory, which contends that our perceptions of what constitutes right and wrong are influenced by the social roles and identities by which we are exposed (Dominelli, 2019). Education was a significant factor in determining a person's likelihood of being appointed to a public position. In general, individuals who had advanced

degrees felt more capable of taking action, were more confident in their capabilities, and acknowledged that there are a variety of factors that contribute to the vulnerability of children.

When it came to making ethical decisions, preparation and training were incredibly important components. It has been brought to people's attention that the utilisation of legal knowledge and ethical decision-making is beneficial to their success in their roles. Having earned a master's degree, these professionals recognised the significance of ethical training and suggested incorporating real-life case analysis into their educational programs. As a result of the study, it was discovered that acquiring practical skills in child welfare and trauma-informed care improved the way in which social workers evaluated risks, responded to them, and assisted children in maintaining their rights. Therefore, education should include lessons that involve hands-on experience and combine a variety of subjects, reflecting the work that is done to protect children. However, not all social workers participated in the effort to raise awareness (Reamer, 2022). The majority of social workers are of the opinion that engaging with the public is very important for the protection of children. The existence of this separation is evidence that certain organisational and structural issues prevent social workers from participating in larger advocacy actions. The literature makes it abundantly clear that social workers should have the ability to function within existing systems while simultaneously working to change or challenge those systems when they support inequality or injustice. It is common practice to put advocacy on the back burner in social work due to time constraints, an excessive amount of work, and inadequate support from organisations (Sewpaul, 2019). This is despite the fact that advocacy plays an essential part in the field. In order to achieve success in social work, it was discovered that partnerships with other organisations and groups are of utmost importance. In the context of collaboration between different agencies, a number of respondents emphasised the significance of trust and open communication as having a significant impact. Despite this, there is a lack of inclusivity in social services, as indicated by the experiences of individuals with lower levels of education. This demonstrates the importance of providing services that take into account numerous different cultures. It is explained in the literature that the services that are provided to children are more effective and sustainable when they are provided in collaboration with other professionals from the fields of health, education, and law enforcement.

When it came to monitoring and evaluating child welfare services, there were both positive and negative aspects about the process. According to the majority of participants, the primary reason for this was the lack of resources, which made it difficult to conduct comprehensive

evaluations. As a result, these programs were rated as being somewhat effective. In order to be responsible and to improve in the future, it is necessary to evaluate different strategies. The proposal to devote more resources to data, feedback, and performance evaluation in order to assist in the improvement of services and responsibility is supported by the study, which is based on the existing body of literature. When it came to selecting the interventions that were the most successful, the Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA) received an overwhelming amount of support from individuals at every educational level. The fundamental principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are aligned with this way of thinking, which places an emphasis on the rights that children are entitled to and the manner in which they participate (Hyslop, 2018). There is a demonstration of the ethical principles of social work in the CRBA's main points, which are empowerment, inclusion, and listening to the voices of children. These principles are intended to both protect and assist vulnerable children in making progress. A large number of participants expressed their support for preventative measures, such as early assistance and efforts to strengthen families, which reaffirms the significance of taking action in advance rather than waiting until it is too late to provide assistance. Through the findings of this study, it has been demonstrated that social work is driven by a set of deeply held principles and convictions. Not only are social workers able to influence the outcomes for individuals, but they also have the ability to influence the structures of society. Nevertheless, in order to perform this job effectively, people will need to put in personal effort, have a distinct moral direction, receive support from the organisation, go through the appropriate training, and work together with your coworkers (Sewpaul, 2019). This study investigates a wide range of aspects of the ethical work environment that social workers are expected to maintain. It does so by employing the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Social Justice Theory, and the Human Society Theory. The research indicates that there should be increased support for social workers in order to ensure that they carry out their responsibilities with the utmost dedication and that they behave in an ethical manner. The redesign of lesson plans, the strengthening of laws, the establishment of stronger connections between various fields of work, and the raising of society's awareness are all elements that are required. Providing vulnerable children with social work that is ethical requires taking into account gender, culture, and the appropriate support within the structure. This is an important consideration. The findings of this study highlight the significance of educational institutions, educators, and policymakers placing a greater emphasis on the teaching of ethics in order to assist children who are under their care. Only by taking this action will we be able to guarantee that children from all walks of life are provided with the amount of care, respect, and

opportunities to which they are entitled. For the purpose of protecting social justice, social workers should be prepared to take the lead by relying on ethics, demonstrating compassion, and putting in place the systems that fully appreciate the life chances of every child.

6.2 Implications

What was learned in this study can greatly influence both the study and practice of social work with children who are vulnerable. A central issue in these results is the need to strengthen the ethical standards in social work, mainly when children get marginalized, neglected, and victimized. Hence, these impacts depend on one another and underline why social workers require clear theories, responsible public institutions, and work done by experts from other fields to look after children's rights and security (Kobrusieva, et al., 2021). According to this study, the main implication is that social work practitioners should strive to understand ethical principles in great detail. Even though ethical guidelines help a lot, they are often put into practice in difficult and uncertain circumstances. It appears from the findings that while most practitioners know the ethical rules, the level of their knowledge can be very different, mostly depending on educational level (Rees, 2021). People who had advanced degrees usually found it easier to handle ethical issues, but those who hadn't received the same kind of education lacked confidence when dealing with ethics. It proves that ethical training should be strengthened and followed at every stage of a person's development as a professional.

This awareness has major effects on the education and training of social workers. Ethical reasoning should be considered an active subject that is integrated into the whole training process. Ethical principles can be understood better when students participate in case studies, role-play, and join workshops on related topics. It is necessary for ethics training to take the real social work situations into account, including cultural traditions, rules from institutions, and legal regulations (Weinberg, 2019). Also, the findings indicate that having a human rights approach in every social work setting is essential. Children's rights are well represented by the standards and guidelines of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Even so, according to the study, there are practitioners who say they are not completely familiar with or supported by present legal guidelines (Hickey, et al., 2019). A lot of social workers said they only had moderate faith in the usefulness of laws to tackle ethical issues and support children's rights. This proves that social work theory needs to be

updated so that it includes the idea of social work as a rights-based practice that involves duties in law and politics.

Social work students must learn about human rights for this goal to be achieved. Social workers should be prepared to spot rights violations and make attempts to change such acts within the rules of law. Therefore, social workers are required to understand laws, argue for policy reforms, and be knowledgeable about politics. Also important is the understanding that children should be treated as people who can voice their rights and must be respected (Kaltenborn, 2020). The study shows that many practitioners are now using approaches based on human rights, for example the Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA). But, their potential will only be met when they are built into the system, backed up by policies, the commitment of organizations, and partnership among sectors. The study also points out that working together is important for ensuring and supporting children's welfare. Multiple fields are involved in child protection, so social workers, legal experts, educators, health workers, community leaders, and policymakers must all cooperate (Rahman, et al., 2021). It is found that although social workers appreciate teamwork, it does not always happen due to divisions in organizations, insufficient resources, and unfair distribution of roles. Such disunity in the system makes interventions less effective and also causes social workers to experience more emotional and ethical burdens while working on complicated cases.

To handle this issue, cooperation across the entire system should be made official. It means setting up official ways for communication, managing joint cases, and working together to decide on issues. Having teams from various disciplines, teaming up on casework, and sharing training resources can make people work together more strongly. Also, creating an environment where professionals from various backgrounds respect and trust each other is necessary. If ethics training is shared, if there is more dialogue between groups, and if everyone cooperates in evaluations, barriers will be easier to overcome and all will share the same goals (McFadden, et al., 2019). Officials should consider inter-agency partnership mandatory and make sure it is funded, since it is necessary for effective child protection. Research on this topic also reveals the role of systems and structures in affecting ethical choices made by social workers. It was found in the study that factors such as bureaucratic policies, company rules, and what the public expects regularly make it difficult to act ethically. Those who were less qualified or did not get much support from their organizations were the most affected by the pressures. This result is in line with what other literature has stated about the role of the organization in influencing ethics (McGregor, 2019). Whether to act ethically in psychology depends on a person's

integrity, training, and also on the context or place they practice in. Support for ethical behavior should come from the organization, not only from each person. Organizations have to lay out ethical processes and give social workers the freedom to make decisions aimed at protecting the child, without being subject to punishment. If ethical committees, regular ethics checks, and forums for ethics discussions are introduced, the culture in an organization will favor ethical conduct instead of restricting it. In social work, leaders and managers should behave ethically, make children's best interests a priority, and ensure all important decisions include ethical matters.

The study points out that social workers' gender and level of education often have an effect on both their beliefs and how they carry out their roles. Social workers realized that gender plays a key role in influencing both their ethics and how they handle legal matters. Female volunteers were more attuned to children's rights and took part in collaborative work more often. It means that social work approaches should account for the impact of the identities of workers on their interactions with young people and other institutions (Alik-Lagrange, et al., 2021). It is important to create gender-friendly policies that address and support the special issues and strengths of female social workers, mainly in challenging emotional situations. How much education a person has also has a major influence on their professional ability. It appears from the results that social workers who have achieved higher qualifications tend to be more sure about ethics, laws, and dealing with systemic issues. It shows that everyone in social work should be encouraged to learn and progress professionally at all career stages. Bridge programs, scholarships, and ongoing education programs may help workers gain more skills and reduce differences in their knowledge and abilities. In addition, schools should include ethics, legal knowledge, and rights-based methods in every social work curriculum.

It was found that monitoring and evaluation should be improved. Many people pointed out that not having enough resources makes it tricky to assess child welfare services, which in turn influences their quality and proper accountability. This results from a larger problem where there is no focus on using evaluation tools and data in practice. When effective monitoring isn't in place, it gets complicated to tell if the actions being taken genuinely help children or are only being completed to follow regulations. Therefore, there should be a change to use research-proven practice, constantly track results, and include children and their families in the assessment (Edward, 2019). Ultimately, the research suggests that public involvement and support greatly help improve the way child protection measures are put in place. Even though social workers agreed that raising awareness is crucial for children's safety, it was sometimes

difficult for them to join such programs because they didn't have enough time or were restricted by their workplaces. Even so, the evidence presented in this literature points out that public education and advocacy are key to protecting children's rights in society. Advocacy is a major part of social work, so workers in the field must be equipped and expected to perform this function. To make this happen, leaders should be supportive, allocate resources, and work closely with civil organizations that support children and what they require (Gough, 2019). The results of this study give clear directions for making social work with vulnerable children more ethical, legal, and professional. They propose that social work should be understood as a process that respects children's rights, uses multiple disciplines, and depends on solid systems. With regard to theory, this study helps explain how ethics interacts with the roles and systems found in daily practice. It presents useful ideas on how to improve training, teamwork, supervision, and advocacy to support proper child protection. Helping children achieve justice and fairness in society is possible when social workers have the information and support they require.

6.3 Recommendations For Future Research

Using what was learned in this study, more and better research is needed in social work to safeguard the rights and social security of vulnerable children. Although this study points out important matters related to ethics, laws, working together, and professional problems, it creates new opportunities for further study. The points mentioned in this section emphasize key topics for future studies that could help us learn more, improve work in the field, and direct policies for building better and fairer child protection systems. They highlight how we should examine the different aspects of vulnerability, come up with new ways to resolve ethical problems, and check the results of our approaches in the future (Rusmaniah, et al., 2021). We need to study in greater detail the combination of different factors that make children more vulnerable. Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced intersectionality, which shows how the combinations of different social groups, such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation, add to the disadvantages faced by people. The researcher found that gender and education made a difference to social workers, even though the study did not examine how multiple children's identities can combine to increase or decrease their vulnerability or resilience. Workers should use an intersectional approach to identify how several systemic disadvantages affect children's lives. Many children from minority groups are challenged by

discrimination, feeling alienated from their culture, and having few opportunities for getting necessary services (Lawson, 2021). If these factors happen together with poverty, disability, or family troubles, it can lead to a kind of vulnerability that goes unnoticed in usual child protection methods. In the same way, girls from marginalized communities have to deal with extra dangers like gender violence, marrying young, and being kept out of school. When all these influences are not considered, the same strategies can overlook the different needs of children from multiple backgrounds. As a result, researchers should collect and analyze data in ways that reveal how different identities affect each other and properly inform new policies and approaches.

In addition, researchers should study how having more than one identity may affect children and their families when interacting with social workers. Is there a difference in how likely some people are to trust or use child welfare services? Are the ways that cultures and history have treated them in the past influencing how they take part in politics? These questions can only be answered when we use statistical analysis along with research that gives importance to the opinions of children and their families. Thus, researchers help challenge the main ideas that are shared, identify hidden types of exclusion, and work with those who suffer the most to find solutions. Future research should also focus on finding new solutions for ethical disputes that arise while social workers help vulnerable children. New ethical problems arise in social work as society, laws, technology, and the culture of organizations change. It was shown that social workers have to deal with many issues, for example, maintaining people's privacy while making them safe, working with different cultures, or lacking important resources (Blustein, 2019). On the other hand, traditional methods of making ethical choices might not be enough to solve these challenges when they happen. Future studies should concentrate on developing and applying ethical rules that are suitable for the work done in child protection. Researchers have the opportunity to look into how digital ethics relate to social workers interacting with children through technology, especially as telehealth approaches become more popular. Concerns about data privacy, getting consent, literacy with technology, and making information available to all require serious study by scholars. How do health practitioners ensure patient rights to privacy and freedom when working with digital tools? How should we support workers so that they follow ethical standards in their digital work?

In addition, research can study methods where social workers, supervisors, and clients interact to discuss and solve ethical issues. They tend to make processes more open, encourages trust, and ensures decisions are shared, mostly in cases of cross-cultures or with several stakeholders.

Researchers could examine if using ethics committees, peer supervision, or various decision-making tools helps improve ethical results and increases practitioners' confidence. In addition, studies need to explore how the culture of an organization and various systems contribute to ethical behavior. What aspects of a company allow or block good ethical judgment? Do issues of power, leadership, and policies have an impact on how social work ethics are followed? Going beyond looking at individuals, researchers can deepen our understanding of ethics and suggest important changes for the whole system (Baum, 2020). Other important research should involve long-term examinations of programs meant to improve social security and human rights for children who are at risk. Although there are various initiatives to promote child welfare, such as services for early help, caring for trauma, changes in laws, and public campaigns, their long-term effects are usually not well known. Short evaluations only show quick changes in actions or service use, but they are not able to spot long-term outcomes such as how mentally strong the person is, their education, or social connections.

Such studies are essential to check if programs positively influence children in the long run or only provide short help. For instance, is having a family rather than being in an institution linked to good mental health and life contentment as adults? Can using rights-based approaches approach such as the Child Rights-Based Approach increase children's participation and self-advocacy as they age? What side effects or oversights appear as time goes on? Following groups of children over time and in various parts of life allows see what helps them and under which circumstances. Besides, longitudinal studies may show how support during childhood links up with greater social systems. By studying the impact of community features such as neighborhoods, schools, healthcare on children, researchers help find areas where help from different sectors can be coordinated (Geovani, et al., 2021). Understanding these insights is important for setting up helpful policies and dividing resources in places where child protection is still being established. It is also possible for longitudinal research to examine whether the qualifications, gender, or moral study of professionals has an effect on the development of children over years. Is it possible that the best outcomes for children happen when there is a social worker who is both skilled and confident? Having practitioners who are similar to families or come from the same cultural backgrounds makes the families feel more involved and trusted. Studying these links over the years can point out the need for strategy in workforce management and demonstrate how it matters to build cultural competence.

Besides traditional approaches, mixed-methods research helps researchers combine the strengths of looking at both qualitative and quantitative data. Details about children, families,

and practitioners can be revealed by studying cases for a long time, doing ethnographic follow-ups, or involving those affected in the research. They provide solid results and adhere to ethics by enabling people to take part in and guide the research. Lastly, research going forward needs to look at the policy issues that come with the application of child protection interventions. For example, does national child protection policy follow conventions that have been made by international organizations, such as the CRC? Why do certain policies not get fully implemented by those responsible? What influence do political and economic issues have on which child welfare programs get priority and how much money they receive? With both policy analysis and field-level data, researchers can assist in creating governance systems that are quicker, fairer, and pay extra attention to children (Tandrayen-Ragoobur, 2018). According to the results, there are certain areas that require more exploration in the future for child welfare and social work. Since children's needs are getting more complicated, ethical concerns are changing, and there is a need for effective, lasting solutions, a strong and diverse research agenda is needed. Focusing on intersectionality, ethics, and time-based analysis in research will support theory and also give those who work with vulnerable children the capabilities to help them more effectively. What gets discovered through this research can actually help transform lives, support best practices, and ensure every child's rights are respected.

In addition to the broad recommendations outlined earlier, this study identifies specific practical steps for different stakeholders.

For Social Workers

Practitioners should engage in continuous professional development that emphasizes ethical decision-making and child rights-based approaches. Regular reflective practice sessions and peer consultations can help social workers navigate complex dilemmas such as balancing confidentiality with child safety. Social workers should also strengthen their advocacy role by documenting systemic gaps and using this evidence to push for reforms within their organizations.

For Policymakers

Policy frameworks must be reoriented to explicitly integrate ethical standards and child rights principles into welfare programs. This includes ensuring adequate resource allocation for child protection services, reducing bureaucratic barriers that delay interventions, and providing clearer guidelines for resolving ethical conflicts. Policymakers should also institutionalize

participatory mechanisms that include children's voices and frontline social workers' experiences in shaping policy design and evaluation.

For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

NGOs can play a bridging role between vulnerable communities and formal welfare systems. They should invest in community-based programs that enhance families' capacity to provide safe and nurturing environments for children. NGOs can also strengthen inter-organizational collaboration to share best practices, coordinate interventions, and reduce duplication of services. Moreover, by engaging in advocacy campaigns, NGOs can amplify the voices of children and social workers, ensuring that systemic issues such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of access to services receive sustained attention.

By implementing these targeted recommendations, stakeholders can collectively contribute to building a more effective, ethically grounded, and child-centered system of social protection.

6.4 Conclusion

This study stresses the main ethical duties of social workers to promote social security and human rights for at-risk children. At the beginning, the research focused on discovering how social workers handle the tough parts of child protection, ethical problems, and lobbying for changes in the system. A review of literature, empirical facts, and real-life activities in the field proved that social workers are expected to look after the welfare and rights of individuals from marginalized groups. All of their actions are based on ethical principles like respecting confidentiality, being aware of cultural issues, getting informed consent, justice, and defending patients' interests. The results of the study show that social workers should be committed to justice and human rights, in addition to complying with professional standards (Reich, 2020). Ethics demand action, so we protect children, value families, call for changes, and oppose rules that continue wrongdoings. Decision-making is especially delicate in work with vulnerable children since they are at the mercy of those much stronger than them. It was confirmed that social workers who stick to important ethical values can better interact with children and their families. Besides improving how interventions are done, these values help children become more trusting, strong, and empowered. Ethical practice is what supports the effectiveness and value of any efforts in social work. Whenever children encounter poverty, neglect, violence, or discrimination, social workers are usually the first to help and the only ones offering help to

the system. It has become clear in our study that it is ethical integrity that helps social workers stick to what is right when facing tough situations.

The study pointed out that people's understanding of ethical requirements was not the same and depended on their gender, education, and how much training they had received. For example, social workers with better education or more working experience usually showed a clearer and stronger grasp of ethical subjects. On the other hand, individuals with less formal education felt less ready to deal with difficult ethical issues. They prove that it is important for everyone in this field to be educated ethically, updated professionally, and skilled enough to act in the best manner for children. The research pointed out the challenges that social workers encounter when trying to follow ethics, especially when dealing with pressure from the organization, the law, or the system. It was common for professionals to deal with dilemmas that required using their ethical beliefs, while also considering a lack of resources, internal bureaucracy, or cultural issues in the organization. Ethics in management is challenging since it involves the conflict between what is right in theory and what is right in practice. It makes it important that social workers have supportive surroundings to think, talk, and make difficult decisions without worrying about consequences. Teamwork among different agencies was found to play an important part in handling ethics related to children. Social work takes place among various groups. It operates in areas linked to education, healthcare, police force, legislation, and community help. Therefore, ethics should be applied both by individuals and by organizations that focus on children's rights, are respectful of cultures, and cooperate with others. When everyone in the team collaborates smoothly, it eliminates overlap in services, covers the child's needs, and brings all services together under the best interests of the child. If teamwork is lacking or not well organized, many children may be left out by a system that is already too demanding.

For this reason, stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and community leaders are called upon to join forces and care for the wellbeing and rights of young people in need. They have to do more than simply talk about ethics to set up systems and policies for ethical social work. For example, legal rules should be checked and put in line with human rights standards across the world; funds should go toward helping children; data and evaluation should be improved; and the rules for professionals should be constantly updated as needed. In addition, it is important to promote ethical leadership at every level to show transparency, accountability, and justice. This study also points out the need for children to take part in ethical matters. Proper social work always regards children as important rights-holders

who can affect change, not just as those who get help. It is important for adults to listen to children, feel what they are going through, and let them share in decisions related to them. It is in accordance with the UN's CRC to use this approach, which benefits children by making sure help is supportive of their identity and autonomy, as well as safe and protective. Unfortunately, the importance of involving children is still ignored in most settings by those who think children are not capable. Changing these barriers involves changing society, teaching participatory approaches, and requiring laws that give importance to the choices and opinions of children.

It also pointed out that present monitoring and evaluation methods are not fully capable of judging the ethical aspects of social work activities. Although lots of programs focus on counting home visits and referrals, very few look at whether their programs are ethical, child-focused, and respect rights. This issue needs to be handled in order for stakeholders to gain lessons, improve what they do, and be held responsible. Ethical principles, collaboration between stakeholders, and self-reflection in supervision ought to be included in every child welfare program. They can offer important details on how people decide, how children see the services they get, and how morals are put into practice. In particular, the research points out that ethics should be seen as something every individual shares, rather than just a single person's duty (Coyle, 2018). It is not possible for social workers to act according to their ethics when the environment is unsupportive or hostile. Institutions that encourage reflection, respect all kinds of people, and focus on employees' development are more ethical. It gets worse when efficiency is put above fairness, rules are emphasized more than kindness, and policies come before people. So, strengthening the ethics in social work means providing support to individuals and holding institutions responsible at the same time. The study proposes that accomplishing justice and equality for all children calls for important changes based on good values and ethics. Although each social worker is important, major changes happen when people join forces. Among other things, it requires updating public beliefs about child welfare, dealing with the main reasons for children's vulnerability, and making sure that all children receive inclusive and positive services. For this reason, ethical social work should play a key role in supporting social justice, human rights, and environmentally friendly progress.

These results are only possible because of the importance of education. These programs should make sure students gain ethics, the ability to think deeply, and a sense of justice. Teaching practitioners is necessary, but it should also involve explaining, why, and how things are done as well as why they have such values and beliefs. Ethics needs to be taught in many places and

backed up with direct experience, help from mentors, and opportunities for reflection. In the same way, ethical issues must be given importance in social work research, as it looks at how values are dealt with, how problems are solved, and how the ethics code is kept in different settings. Business ethics needs to adjust to new situations and trends. Digital changes, an increasing number of refugees, climate change, and COVID-19 have all added new ethical challenges in the field of social work (Moyn, 2018). What should be done to preserve confidentiality when people use digital channels? What can be done to ensure that the rights of refugee children are respected in areas where politics is unfriendly towards them? What strategies do social workers use to help people obey public health orders without violating their family's privacy? Since these issues are changing, we need revised ethics, joint research, and many discussions among academics, policy-makers, and professionals. This research adds to the efforts aimed at identifying, boosting, and supporting ethical work with children who are vulnerable in social work. It proves that ethics should not be treated as secondary but as a main feature of success in any field and in social life. Those social workers who follow ethical rules are more capable of helping children, defending their interests, and encouraging them to build fulfilling lives. Nevertheless, it cannot happen just by itself. The active role of governments, educators, communities, families, and children is needed to place ethics as the central guide for actions.

Empirical Contributions

The study provides fresh evidence on the ethical obligations of social workers in safeguarding the rights of vulnerable children. By employing a triangulated qualitative design, it captures multiple perspectives—through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis—thereby presenting a holistic picture of the challenges faced in practice. The findings highlight recurring dilemmas around confidentiality, parental rights, systemic inequalities, and organizational constraints. Importantly, the study demonstrates how social workers actively negotiate these challenges by relying on professional values and collaborative strategies. These insights add to the empirical body of knowledge on child protection in contexts where poverty, social exclusion, and structural barriers remain widespread. The study also generates context-specific evidence that can inform policy reforms, institutional training, and the design of more responsive welfare systems.

Theoretical Contributions

Beyond empirical findings, this study advances the application of three theoretical frameworks—Social Justice Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action, and Human Society Theory—in the domain of child welfare research. Social Justice Theory is shown to provide a strong ethical lens for evaluating the fairness and equity of social protection measures. The Theory of Reasoned Action proves useful in explaining how social workers' decisions are shaped by a combination of personal attitudes, professional norms, and perceived constraints. Human Society Theory further extends the analysis by situating these ethical decisions within the broader context of institutional and systemic structures, including legal frameworks and welfare policies. By integrating these theories into the research design and analysis, the study contributes to the development of a more comprehensive theoretical toolkit for exploring social work ethics. Taken together, the empirical and theoretical contributions of this research not only enrich the academic literature but also provide a foundation for practical interventions and policy recommendations aimed at strengthening social security and protecting the human rights of vulnerable children.

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APPENDIX A:
QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE: IMPROVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN; THE ETHICAL OBLIGATION OF SOCIAL WORK.

We kindly invite you to take a moment to participate in this survey.

* Indicates required question

1. Email *

2. First Name: *

3. Last Name: *

4. Gender: *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer Not To Say

5. Which age group do you belong to? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 20-29 years
- ☐ 30-39 years
- ☐ 40-49 years
- ☐ 50-59 years
- ☐ 60 years and above

6. What is the highest level of qualification you possess? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Up to Higher Secondary
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctorate (PhD or equivalent)

7. What role do you currently play professionally? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Social Worker
- ☐ Healthcare Professional
- ☐ Child Welfare Specialist
- ☐ Government Official
- ☐ NGO Employee
- ☐ Community Worker/Outreach Volunteer
- ☐ Other:

8. How many years of experience do you possess in your current role? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ More than 15 years

9. What is your principal area of expertise in the field of social work? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Child welfare service delivery
- ☐ Child rights and protection advocacy
- ☐ Child adoption services
- ☐ Mental health care services for children
- ☐ Family support services

10. What is your current employment status? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time
- ☐ Contract/Temporary
- ☐ Per Diem

11. In which geographical area do you primarily operate? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Suburban
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Multiple regions

12. What is the total annual income of your household? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Less than ₹3,00,000
- ☐ ₹3,00,000 - ₹4,99,999
- ☐ ₹5,00,000 - ₹6,99,999
- ☐ ₹7,00,000 - ₹8,99,999
- ☐ ₹9,00,000 - ₹10,99,999
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

13. What is the primary reason for your interest in the field of child welfare? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Personal experience with the system
- ☐ Desire to advocate for children's rights
- ☐ Interest in social justice and equity
- ☐ Desire to Make a Difference
- ☐ Academic or professional interest

14. How well do you understand the ethical obligations of promoting vulnerable children's social security and human rights? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Poorly
- ☐ Not at all

15. Which of the following is the most difficult ethical obligation or commitment to fulfil in your work with vulnerable children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Ensuring confidentiality and privacy
- ☐ Advocating for social justice and children's rights
- ☐ Balancing professional boundaries with empathy
- ☐ Navigating conflicts of interest
- ☐ Collaborating effectively with other agencies

16. How often do you face challenges in maintaining ethical standards due to external pressures (e.g., organizational, societal)? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very often
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

17. What is your level of familiarity with the current legal frameworks that govern child protection in your field? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Slightly familiar
- ☐ Not familiar at all

18. How well do legal frameworks support your ethical commitments to vulnerable children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Moderately
- ☐ Poorly
- ☐ Not at all

19. For resolving ethical dilemmas in social work, how effective are the legal frameworks in providing guidance? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Ineffective
- ☐ Very ineffective

20. How well do child welfare training programs prepare you for ethical issues? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Extremely well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Moderately well
- ☐ Poorly
- ☐ Not at all

21. Which area of training do you find to be the most advantageous for navigating *
ethical obligations?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Legal knowledge
- ☐ Cultural competence
- ☐ Conflict resolution
- ☐ Advocacy skills
- ☐ Ethical decision-making frameworks

22. What is the level of inclusivity of social services for vulnerable children in your *
region?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Inclusive
- ☐ Somewhat inclusive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat exclusive
- ☐ Very exclusive

23. What is your level of confidence in meeting the needs of children from various * backgrounds in your social work practice?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Slightly confident
- ☐ Not confident at all

24. How crucial is public awareness in strengthening the protection of the rights of * children who are at risk?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very crucial
- ☐ Crucial
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Slightly crucial
- ☐ Not at all crucial

25. How frequently do you participate in initiatives aimed at promoting public awareness on the rights of vulnerable children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very frequently
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

26. What is the frequency of your coordination with other social workers or organisations to meet your ethical obligations? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very frequently
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

27. What is the level of effectiveness of your collaboration with other agencies in meeting the needs of vulnerable children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Moderately effective
- ☐ Ineffective
- ☐ Very ineffective

28. What is the most effective factor for fostering collaboration in your practice? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Open communication
- ☐ Shared vision and goals
- ☐ Trust and respect among partners
- ☐ Defined roles and responsibilities
- ☐ Variety of resources and expertise

29. How often are you involved in the process of evaluating and monitoring initiatives that aim to help children who are at risk?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very often
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

30. How effective is existing monitoring and evaluation program in enhancing social work practices for vulnerable children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Moderately effective
- ☐ Ineffective
- ☐ Very ineffective

31. What is the most difficult aspect of monitoring and evaluating child welfare services? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Lack of resources
- ☐ Inefficient training
- ☐ Data collection issues
- ☐ Resistance to change
- ☐ Applying insights to practice and policy

32. In your opinion, which approach or strategy improves the efficacy of social work practice when working with children who are at risk? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Coordinated network of services
- ☐ Early help and preventive measures
- ☐ Actively involving communities
- ☐ Collaborating with professionals
- ☐ Investing in the training and development

33. In your opinion, which kind of intervention best advances the rights of children? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Advocacy at policy levels
- ☐ Solely providing financial support
- ☐ Offering counselling services only
- ☐ Conducting workshops for parents only
- ☐ Implementing Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA)

Thank you for participating!
